

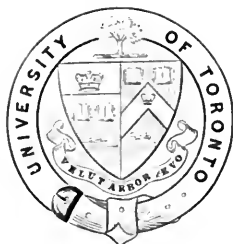
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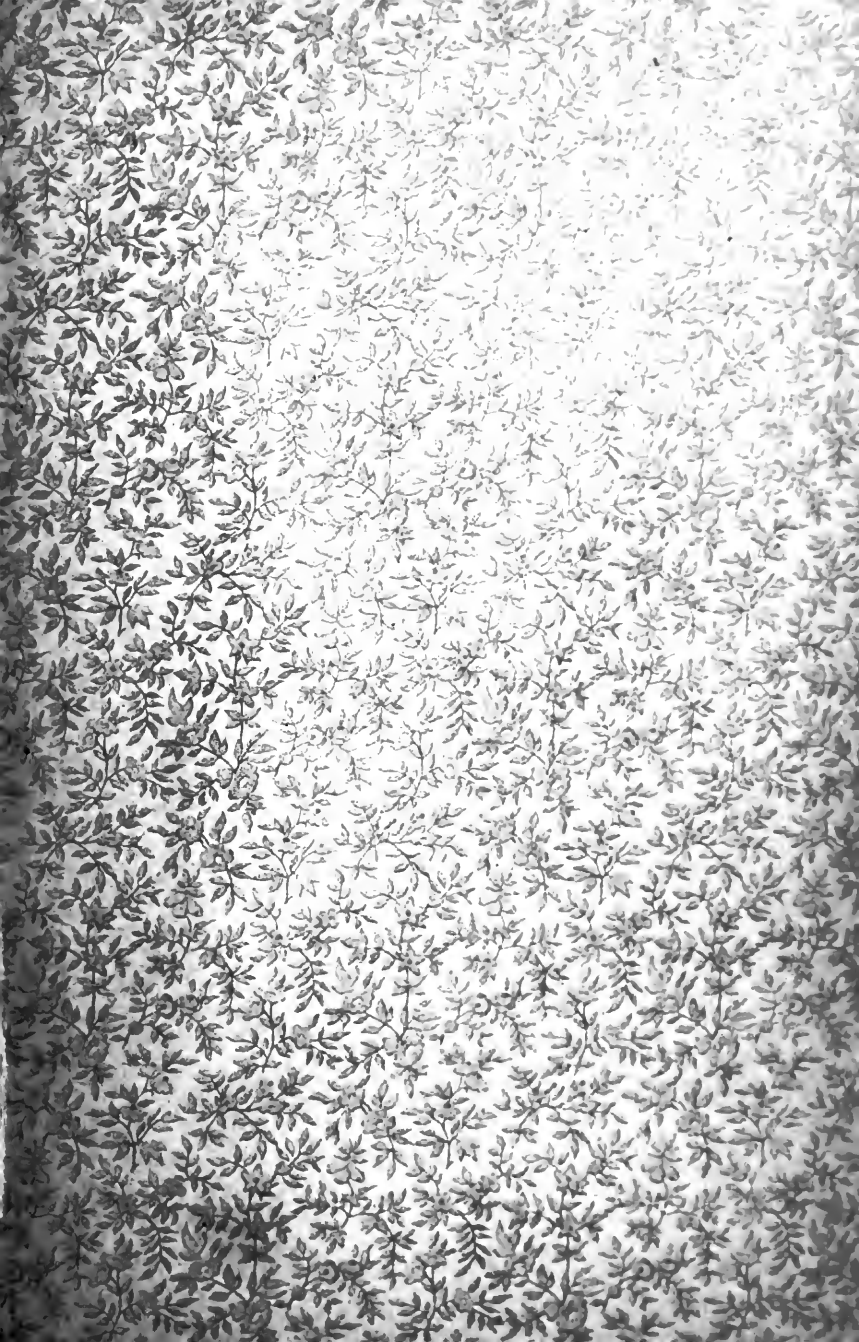
—PETRARCH—
—AND OTHER ESSAYS—





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PETRARCH
-AND-OTHER-ESSAYS-
-BY-
T.H. REARDEN.



WILLIAM DOXEY.

SAN FRANCISCO.

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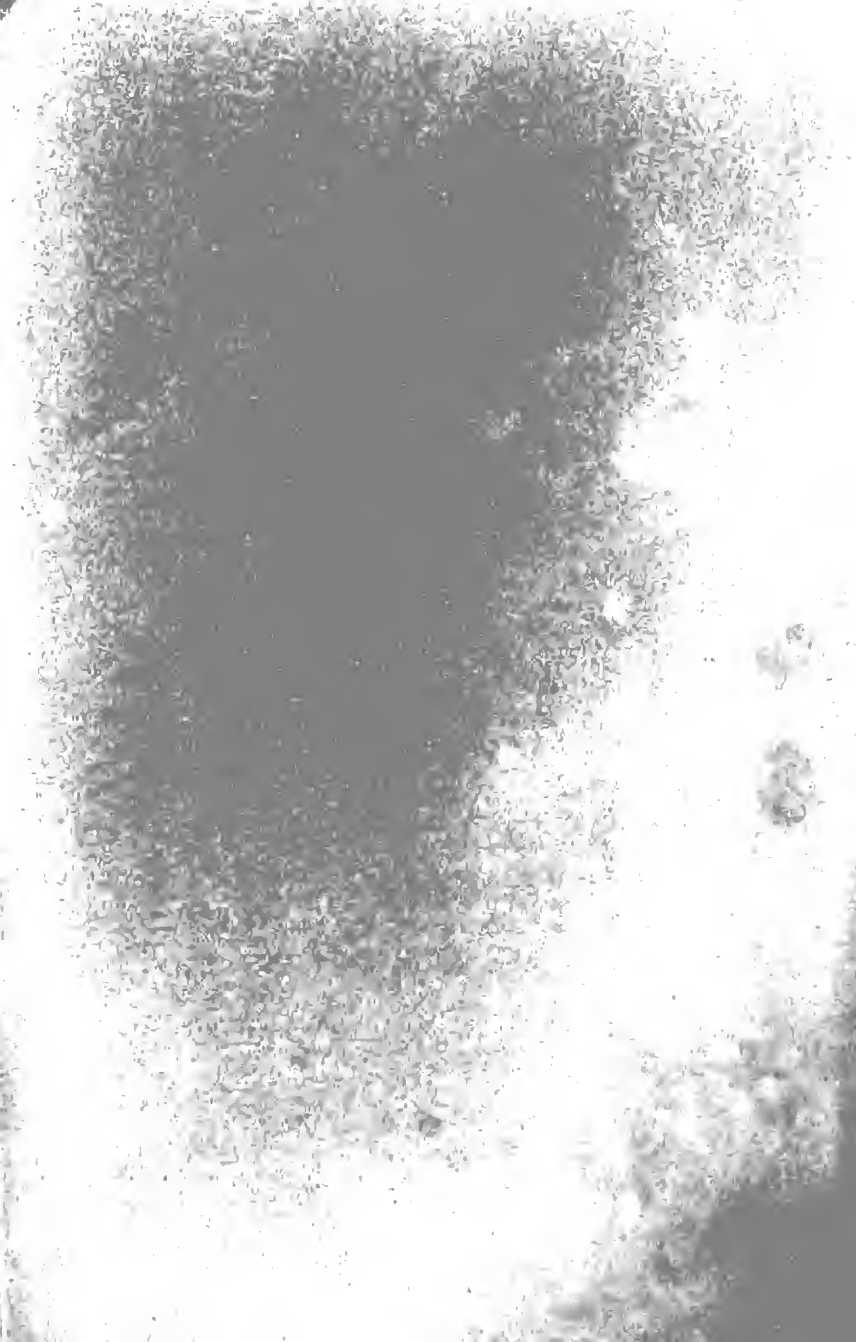
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.



TIMOTHY H. REARDEN.

JUDGE TIMOTHY H. REARDEN was born of Irish parentage, in Wooster, Ohio, in the year 1839. His father, Dennis Rearden, died while Timothy was a child, and the widow, with two young children, but with the cheerful courage of her race, undertook the battle of life in their behalf.

The brightness and wit of her little boy soon made him friends. At the age of sixteen he graduated from the High School of the city of Cleveland, and four years later from Kenyon College.

In college he was both the delight and the terror of the professors. His scholarship and scholarly tastes were their pride, his affectionate nature endeared him to their hearts, yet his escapades were sometimes serious ; but because in part of his ability, and more because of the love he inspired, no severe penalties were inflicted. When he left college he had, in a very unusual degree, impressed himself upon the memory and affections of professors and students alike.

Reporting for newspapers, teaching in the Cleveland public schools, and studying law occupied the next three or four years.

In 1862, Judge Rearden served for a time in an Ohio regiment, in response to an urgent short-term call. This touch of army life set many chords, patriotic and poetic, vibrating in him, which always remained sensitive.

*Timothy H.
Rearden.*

It was not his fortune to have been engaged in any great battle; but who that knew him can doubt his possession of that splendid courage so common in his race, and only needing opportunity to attain distinction or a glorious death?

About 1866 he came to California, and for a time was employed in the United States Mint. Bret Harte, Ambrose Bierce, and some others of literary tastes and acquirements were fellow-employés, and Rearden soon became one of a little coterie of scholars, artists, and writers.

While others wrote and published, he wrote but did not, save in rare instances, publish. His literary tastes were so exacting, that nothing he did seemed to satisfy him. Essays and poems were written and laid aside, as not, in his opinion, coming up to the requirements of publicity. But the great drawback that prevented his coming before the people was his shyness. Nothing could induce him to put himself in a position where he would attract attention. In this age of brass, such modesty as his, joined with such merit, is a rare spectacle.

Meantime he prosecuted his law studies, and became in time a learned lawyer, but remained all too modest to push himself or his fortunes. After leaving the Mint he worked a while for other lawyers, but about 1872 opened an office of his own. What came to him in the way of business he disposed of with a wealth of learning and research out of all proportion frequently to the importance of the matter involved.

The study of languages and of literature was his great delight. It is not much of exaggeration to say that Greek was as familiar to him as is our

mother tongue to most of us. He seemed to know all the leading modern languages, and even their various dialects. A publication of his on some ancient forms of the German language won for him reputation and correspondence with distinguished literary men of that country, who freely expressed their admiration of such knowledge by a scholar who never was in Europe, and whose home was in remote California.

*Timothy H.
Rearden.*

Any notice of Judge Rearden would be incomplete that did not call attention to his remarkable faculty of winning affection. He was so shy that not many knew him; but those who did,—children, women, men,—gave him their hearts.

In 1883 a vacancy occurred on the bench of the Superior Court, and Governor Stoneman had the right under the Constitution to fill it by appointment. As usual, there was a scramble for the place. The Governor was so distracted by the claims of the different candidates, that finally he said to some members of the Bar Association that he would be pleased if that body would make a recommendation to him of a suitable candidate. Thereupon the lawyers belonging to that organization got together and took a vote by ballot as to their preference for the vacant judgeship. Our deceased friend received two-thirds of all the votes cast. Governor Stoneman said he had never heard of Mr. Rearden before, but that he could not overlook such an indorsement, and so appointed him.

In the following year he was elected by the people to succeed himself, and served as judge till January 1, 1891. On the expiration of his term he resumed the practice of his profession.

Timothy H. Rearden. It was while Judge Rearden was on the bench that his romantic marriage took place, which, while it cost his friends his companionship, was felt by them to concentrate the best of his life in a peculiarly interesting way. He married Miss Cowles, the daughter of a Cleveland and California family with which he had been closely connected in kindly relations from his youth. His friends rejoice in seeing in the little daughter, the only child of this marriage, the promise of a continuance of her father's unusual qualities.

Ill health came to be a frequent companion, but neither he nor his friends had any suspicion until near the end that there was any danger of his removal.

His last bit of work was the taking up and completing the noble poem for the last memorial exercises of the Grand Army post to which he belonged.

For one hundred years the pathetic story of Mozart's Requiem has touched the hearts of all who read it. Judge Rearden's poem, prepared for a memorial of his comrades, was his requiem. It was the last act of his life. With the shadows of death closing around him, he gave the final touches to the poem and sent it to the post to be read.

" Life's fevered day declines : its purple twilight falling
Draws length'ning shadows from the broken flanks ;
And from the column's head, a viewless chief is calling :
' Guide right — close up your ranks. ' "

California has not produced anything finer in its line,—nor so good,—since Bret Harte's tribute to Dickens, more than twenty years ago. There is

a rhythm and a swing about it that reminds one of the swing and cadence of marching men. *Timothy H. Rearden.*

This offering of our comrade to the noble dead was read on the evening of May 3, 1892. A few days later he joined the glorious army in the future land.

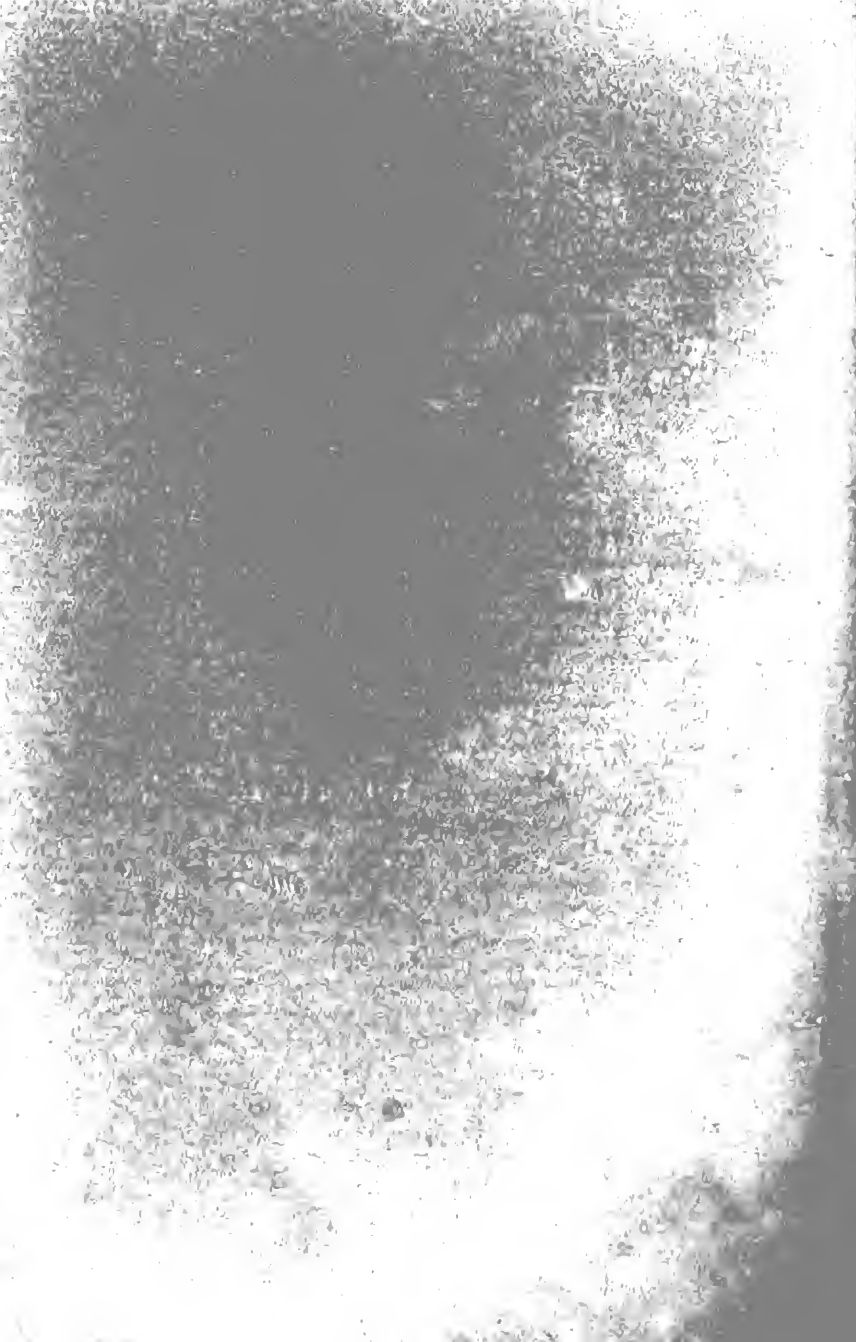
To him, permeated by Grecian thought and literature, how naturally came the Grecian idea of heaven, and with what poetic power he weaves it with the martial inspirations of the occasion !

" Far in the broad and gray expanse of spirit vision,
Where tempests rail not, Heaven forever smiles,
Float on an ever-laughing sea, the Fields Elysian,
The wished-for Happy Isles.

" There, long-lost comrades, risen from your couches gory,
Leaving your nameless graves and crumbling clay,
And, recking nothing earthly fame or paltry glory,
Ye know a brighter day.

" And there the stately captains of the host immortal
Call out the guard that ushers heroes in ;
And each brave soul that, trembling, knocks at Death's dark
portal
Is proudly mustered in."

WARREN OLNEY.



A MAN OF LETTERS.

IN the death of ex-Judge Timothy H. Rearden, California has experienced a loss of which she is not presently conscious, and which is more likely to be adequately estimated in another generation than in this. A lawyer dies, and his practice passes to others. A judge falls in harness; another is appointed or elected, and the business of the court goes on as before, frequently better. But for the vacancy left by a scholar and man of letters there are no applicants. To that there is no successor; neither the Governor has the appointing power nor the people the power to elect. The vacancy is permanent, the loss irreparable; something has gone out of the better and higher life of the community which cannot be replaced, and the void is the dead man's best monument, invisible but imperishable. Other scholars and men of letters will come forward in the new generation, but of none can it be said that he carries forward on the same lines the work of the "vanished hand," nor declares exactly those truths of nature and art that would have been formulated by the "voice that is still."

In that elder education which was once esteemed the only needful intellectual equipment of a gentleman, those attainments still commonly, and perhaps preferably, denoted by the word "scholarship," Judge Rearden was probably without an equal on this side of the continent. This

A Man of Letters. statement will surprise many even of those of his personal friends who thought they knew him best; for, except by his habit of historical and literary allusion—to which he was perhaps somewhat over-addicted—and by that significant something so difficult to name, yet to the discerning few so obvious, in the thought and speech of learned men—which is not altogether breadth and reach of reason, nor altogether subtlety of taste and sentiment, and, in sober truth, is compatible with their opposites,—except for these indirect disclosures, he seldom, and to few indeed, gave even a hint of the wealth in the treasury of his mind.

Graduating from Kenyon College, in Ohio, with little except a knowledge of Latin and Greek, a studious habit, and disposition so unworldly that it might almost be called unearthly, he pursued his amassment of knowledge with the unfailing diligence of an unfailing love to the end. He knew not only the classical languages, and all, or nearly all, the tongues of modern Europe, but their various dialects as well. To know a language is nothing; but to know its literature from the beginning forward, and to have incorporated its veritable essence and spirit into mind and character—that is much; and that is what Rearden had done with regard to all these tongues. Doubtless this is not the meat upon which intellectual Cæsars feed, and doubtless he did not make that full use of his attainments which the world approves as “practical,” and at which he smiled, in his odd, tolerant way, as one may smile at the earnest work of a child making mud pies.

Yet Rearden’s was not altogether a barren pen. Of Bret Harte’s bright band of literary coadjutors

on the old *Overland Monthly* he was among the first and best, and at various times, though irregularly and all too infrequently, he enriched the various Californian and other periodicals with noble contributions in prose and verse. Among the former were essays on Petrarch and Tennyson; the latter included a poem of no mean merit on the Charleston earthquake, and a recent one which he had intended to read before the George H. Thomas Post of the Grand Army of the Republic, but was prevented by his last illness. Reading it now in the solemn light that lies along his path through the Valley of the Shadow, the initial stanza seems to have a significance almost prophetic:

" Life's fevered day declines : its purple twilight falling
Draws length'ning shadows from the broken flanks ;
And from the column's head, a viewless chief is calling :
' Guide right—close up your ranks.' "

Some of his papers for the Chit-chat Club could not too easily be matched by selections from the magazines and reviews, and if a collection were made of the pieces that he loved to put out in that wasteful way, we should have a volume of notable reading, distinguished for a sharply accented individuality of thought and style.

For a number of years before his death Rearden was engaged in constructing (the word "writing" is here inadequate) a work on Sappho, which, as we understand the matter, was to be a kind of compendium of all the little that is known and pretty nearly all the much that has been conjectured and said of her. It was to be profusely illustrated by master-hands, copiously annotated, and enriched by *variorum* readings—a book for

A Man of Letters. bookworms. Of its present *status* we are not advised, but trust that it is so far advanced toward completion that none of this labor of love may be lost. A work which for many years engaged the hand and the heart of such a man as he cannot, of whatever else it may be devoid, lack that distinction which is to literature what it is to character—its life, its glory, and its crown.

AMBROSE BIERCE.

ESSAYS.



FRANCIS PETRARCH.

"Behold the man that loved and lost ;
But all he was is overworn."

"Odero, si potero ; si non, invitus amabo."



IN taking as the subject of my essay the first and greatest lyric poet of the Italians, I feel conscious that I am on well-worn and possibly over-worked literary ground, which has been ploughed up, harrowed, and planted (often-times with exotic crops of fiction rather than facts), generation by generation, for nearly five centuries. I do not intend to offer anything new in the way of illustration, or to give more than a sketchy review, the materials for which might be examined by any one in an hour's time spent in an ordinary public library.

The fact is, that novel research has at this day few outposts. One might go to India, and, after a lifetime spent at its oracles, bring back to the western world of civilization something new and valuable ; one might pitch his tent among the bituminous ruins of Babylon,

*Francis
Petrarch.*

and find profitable subject for study ; but European history has been read and re-read, indexed, glossaried, padded with excursus, and viewed in so many lights that not a fleck or spot remains unnoted, even for the scholar who haunts the literary walks of London or Paris, Rome or Florence. But when, instead of being in the swim of European literary currents, one is beached, as it were, on distant shores, with nothing to put him in sympathy with those who are at the centres of mundane intellectual civilization, it is difficult to rise above the trite and commonplace in literary criticism.

But still, if we do not occasionally examine our models, we would forget their peculiar beauties, and would find ourselves drifting away into heresies, and homage to strange gods, leaving the temples and altars of our literary family idols desolate and bare.

One of these shrines was set up five hundred years since at Vacluse, with Francesco Petrarca for its minister, and on its walls the literary world has ever since been hanging up its *ex votos*, and taking part in its liturgy.

FRANCIS PETRARCH was born at the Tuscan town of Arezzo, on the 20th of July, 1304. The circumstances of his birth are of

a romantic character ; and it would seem as if the wandering spirit of unrest that presided over his long life had taken charge of him even in his mother's womb, and made him a pilgrim and exile from his birth.

*Francis
Petrarch.*

His father was one of the band of Florentines driven out during the strifes of the *Bianca* and *Nera* parties, which at the same time sent Dante (a friend of the elder Petrarch) forth as a fugitive, never to return. The ancestry of the poet was of gentle origin but limited means, with a hereditary tendency to municipal aspirations and literary culture. The Petrarca household (Petracco, Petraccolo, and Petrarco) in many points resembled that of Goethe, both in its social and political *status*. But, unlike Goethe, Petrarch's infancy was shadowed with family misfortune and ruin, brought about by the party feuds of Florence ; and at the very hour of the poet's birth, his father was engaged in a forcible but unsuccessful effort to reclaim his citizenship and his property.

A few months after the birth of Petrarch, his mother, Eletta (who was of the Canigiani family), betook herself with the boy to An-cise, where the family had some little property ; and they there remained until the child had reached its eighth year, when the head

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Petrarch.*

of the house removed with them to Avignon, the then residence of Clement V., a Gascon Pope, which place had become and remained the seat of the Papal power during the period styled "The Babylonish Captivity" of the Papacy, commencing in 1305, and continuing until 1378, four years after Petrarch's death.

The young exile, from his eleventh to his fifteenth year, went to school at Carpentras; then removed to Montpellier, where he remained four years.

Like Goethe's parent, Petrarch's father intended him for the law, but, unlike the German, did not as well seek to encourage his son in general literary culture. Indeed, an anecdote is given, depicting Petrarch senior flinging the classical works which his son was surreptitiously reading into the fire. As, however, he seems to have softened, and rescued them from the burning, it is quite probable that Petrarch's fondness for the poets was, after all, a bit of hereditary weakness.

It may also be fairly assumed that any jurist of those days would necessarily have a turn to polite literature, as even Cino da Pistoja, the friend of Dante, and Petrarch's reputed preceptor at Bologna, whither the student had gone to complete his legal studies, was fond of elegant learning, and no mean poet.

himself. Indeed, Cino was the lover of Selvaggia (Ricciardetta dei Selvaggi), one of the four ladies of that period rendered famous by their respective idolaters, Selvaggia being styled the "bel numer' una" of the poetic group, the remaining three being Dante's Beatrice, Petrarch's Laura, and Boccaccio's Fiammetta.

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Petrarch.*

In 1325, Petrarch's mother, a beautiful and good woman, died, and in 1326 his father. These misfortunes drew Petrarch back to Avignon, where he and his only brother, Gerard, found their inheritance wasted by their guardian.

It was possibly his deprivation of means that led Petrarch to take the tonsure. But in those days there was not that strict sense of propriety and of the earnestness of a religious calling that has grown up since; and the court and society of Avignon were remarkable as well for luxury as for the air of gallantry that was indigenous in that home of the joyous science of the Troubadours. At this period his many brilliant social qualities attracted the attention of the Colonna family, a branch of which was settled at Avignon. He also found a friend in John of Florence, Apostolic Secretary, a learned and patriotic Italian.

*Francis
Petrarch.*

Here were the two young men, Francis and Gerard, thrown upon their own resources. Petrarch, barely twenty-two, with a complexion which the women envied him, a gracefulness of person and demeanor that drew every eye upon him in admiration, fastidious as a lady in his attire, actually pinching his feet in small shoes, with an excess of foppishness, with a scholar's skill in chivalrous verse, whether vulgar or learned, was at that date fit for nothing so much as a grand passion, and only needed a proper object to adore and be miserable about. This he found at Matins, April 6, 1327, in the church of Santa Clara, in Avignon. This day was at that period a sort of red-letter Lady day, and may have been fixed upon by the lover as a proper conventional period whence to date his real passion. It is amusing to notice how many hearts, then as now, Cupid pierced with shafts sent from the ambush of a prayer-book. No wonder those early illuminators worked the little wretch as an ornament into the borders of the most fervent orisons!

LAURA DE NOVES, wife of Hugo de Sade, was then in her twentieth year, and had been a wife two years. Taking it for granted that the alleged portraits of her that have reached

us are correct, her style of beauty had a demure dignity which would have been certain to intrall an intellectual person, who might be attracted by it when posed, in religious humility, upon a hassock at early devotions. She was not a blue-stocking. It has been murmured by priggish critics that she could barely have known how to read. She seems to have been femininely fond of gorgeous attire. She had two dresses, the description of which has come down to us, that, to use an enthusiastic expression, were "just too lovely for anything."

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Petrarch.*

Laura was, however, remarkable for her virtue and discretion, and all the personal beauty and accomplishments of the embryo poet appear not to have caused her to swerve a hair's breadth from the safe path of conjugal fidelity. Heine's malicious verses might apply to her :

" Zu der Lauheit und der Flauheit
Deiner Seele passte nicht
Meiner Liebe wilde Rauheit,
Die sich Bahn durch Felsen bricht.

" Du, du liebtest die Chausseen
In der Liebe, und ich schau
Dich am Arm des Gatten gehen.——"

But poor Petrarch took the disease in its most virulent form. His divinity's charms

*Francis
Petrarch.*

were thenceforth ever in his thoughts; and he recorded his feelings and sorrows in a succession of sonnets, madrigals, ballads, and *canzoni*, that, superior to the class of erotic lyrics then in circulation, fell in with the taste in that regard of his contemporaries; and he became famous, not so much for his great qualities as a man as for his unhappy weakness as a lover.

It may be fairly set down as a fact, that a disappointment or misfortune in an author's love affairs is the best recommendation to popular favor that he can have. Successful love, it is true, excites a certain degree of tender interest; but the sentimental world admits the jilted swain, or him who has loved and forever lost, at once to its heart, without asking for passport. It is the nightingale with breast tortured by the thorn whose song is the most emotional. Loss of wealth or power cannot move the heart nearly so effectually as the misfortune which springs from the adverse whim of some simple girl, or the removal by death of some unpretending wife from the circle of a man's worldly happiness. "Hyperion" is a bright book of travel; but I question if its pictures of Old-World experiences would strike us half so vividly if it were not that we view them through the eyes of a

young husband stricken by the greatest domestic misfortune.

*Francis
Petrarch.*

In his twenty-eighth year, Petrarch left Avignon for a grand tour through France and Germany. He hoped by this absence to dull the pain of his unfortunate passion. He visited Paris, the Low Countries, and Germany; and on coming back to Italy, he, together with Jacob Colonna, journeyed to Rome, to gratify their enthusiastic taste for its antiquities.

But Avignon and Laura were ever associated in his thoughts. He hastened back, and on his return thither, at the instance of his patron, Cardinal Colonna, he entered the service of John XXII., then Pope, who employed him as an envoy to France, to Italian princes, and even, as is said, to England.

Wearying of this, Petrarch sought retirement in Vaucluse, where he nursed his love-griefs with the most tender assiduity.

Vaucluse (*Val Chiusa, Vallis Clausa*) is a beautiful and romantic spot, fourteen miles from Avignon. Its rocks, its picturesque beauty, and the fact that here Petrarch idled away so many hours of lovesick melancholy, have rendered the place, with the petulant little river Sorgue, that boils through the valley,

*Francis
Petrarch.*

one of the most interesting attractions for literary pilgrimages in the south of Europe.

In this spot Petrarch lived with an old fisherman and his wife—ignorant peasants, whom Petrarch, however, easily found worthy of his friendship, and about whom he wrote some of his most interesting and touching observations.

At this period he projected his Latin epic, "Africa," desiring thereby to glorify his great hero, Scipio Africanus.

At this time, too, he seems to have had an intrigue which might give cause to doubt his sincerity in his poetic professions of homage to Laura. Whatever feeling Petrarch invested in the experience, the girl involved does not appear to have been as rigorous as Laura. A son, Giovanni, was born in 1337, whom Petrarch afterwards recognized and had legitimated. What a relief the matter-of-fact facility of this humble love must have been to the icicle-tipped sentiment of the stately Laura!

But his learning, his political experience, and his amiable character (and above all, perhaps, the romance of his barren love) began to bring him literary glory; and at this time he received from the Chancellor of the

University of Paris and from the Roman Senate simultaneous invitations to visit those capitals, for the purpose of receiving a laurel crown as a mark of recognition of his eminence as a poet. He decided, from patriotic motives, to accept the Senate's invitation.

*Francis
Petrarch.*

His real claims as a poet rested at that period properly upon his Tuscan sonnets; but these he regarded as but trifles, and he felt that, to entitle him to the glory proffered, he should produce something in Latin, namely, his epic "Africa," before mentioned. This prize poem, in an unfinished state, he submitted to Robert, the cultivated King of Naples, who formally examined him as to his qualifications as Laureate, and pronounced him worthy, giving him his own robe of state as a fitting garment in which to present himself at Rome for the expected honor. Those were the days of pageantry; and the laurel wreath was bestowed upon Petrarch April 17, 1341, in a manner most gratifying to the recipient, and reflecting credit upon the taste and culture of all concerned in the ceremony.

The crowning of Petrarch as poet laureate was the great event of his life. Thereafter he visited Parma, where he learned of the death of his great friend, Jacob Colonna, the Bishop of Lombes, of which event he experi-

*Francis
Petrarch.*

enced a presentiment in a dream. Here he received a stall in the cathedral as arch-deacon, and thereafter devoted his time to the perfecting of his epic.

But his passion drew him back to Avignon and Vacluse, having been commissioned to the new Pope, Clement VI., as advocate of the Roman people; and in his days of retirement he wrote his three imaginary dialogues with St. Augustine, wherein he sought to lay bare his feelings and motives in the matter of his love passion.

The business which Petrarch was to manage at this date was to urge the new Pope to return to Rome and re-establish the papal throne in that city. His colleague in the office was Niccolo Gabrino, better known as Cola di Rienzi, afterwards famous, weak, and unfortunate, as the Roman Tribune, who commenced by attacking the nobles, and ended by aping them.

The Pope, however, notwithstanding the kindness with which he behaved towards the Roman deputies, declined to take the step desired. He permitted the Jubilee, however, which had theretofore been celebrated only once a century, to be proclaimed for 1350.

Petrarch was indignant at the neglect which

Rome received at the hands of His Holiness, and gave vent to his feelings in abuse of Avignon, which place he likened unto the Scriptural Babylon, styling his work "*Liber epistolarum sine titulo.*"

*Francis
Petrarch.*

Gherardo, Petrarch's brother, became at this time a Carthusian friar, having received an impulse to the act from a visit which the two brothers made to a convent. It is said that Gherardo became a monk because of grief at the loss of his mistress by death.

In 1342, Petrarch took up the study of Greek with Bernardo Barlaamo, a Calabrian monk, an envoy sent by the Emperor of the East to the Pope. He subsequently continued the study under Leonzio Pilato, a pupil of Barlaamo's, but never actually acquired any proficiency as a Grecian.

In 1343, a second child, a daughter, Francesca, was born to Petrarch by his every-day mistress; Laura, of course, being only the Platonic titular incumbent of his heart. This mistress died shortly afterwards. Francesca grew to be an estimable woman, and proved a great comfort to her father in his old age.

In this year, King Robert of Naples died, and was succeeded by his granddaughter, Giovanna. Petrarch went to Naples as em-

*Francis
Petrarch.*

bassador to represent the Pope, and also to endeavor to obtain the release of some adherents of the Colonna family, who had been imprisoned. He was treated by the Queen with great consideration, but otherwise was unable to mitigate the tragic disputes between her and the brother of her murdered husband, the King of Hungary.

After a short sojourn at Rome, under the invitation of Jacob II., of Carrara, he visited Padua, and was named by his host as a Canon of Parma. Here he wrote his treatise, "De viris illustribus."

In 1347, the dramatic rise of Rienzi at Rome took place. Rienzi was elected tribune, and the popular movement received the hearty approval of the Pope (Clement VI.), and also of Petrarch. But Rienzi's vanity worked his own destruction, and helped to disgust the aristocratic churchmen with liberty in that shape. It may be well to call attention to the fact that the ecclesiastics of those days were in no sense political absolutists, but seemed only too anxious to raise up the old Roman Republic from under the ruins of the Capitol.

In 1348, the Pest, so eloquently and vividly pictured by Boccaccio, broke out in Italy.

It travelled finally to Avignon, and one of its shining victims was Laura, the news of whose death came to Petrarch at Verona, where he was then sojourning. His grief for the death of his mistress was excessive, and to it we owe some of his tenderest lyrics. Indeed, the poems written subsequently to the death of the lady are remarkable for their genuine feeling, dignity, and beauty.

*Francis
Petrarch.*

In 1350, he went to Rome, to gain the indulgence promised in connection with the papal Jubilee, and after accomplishing his duty, tarried at Arezzo, his birthplace. Here he was honored with an enthusiastic reception, and a decree was entered by the community that the house wherein he was born should be ever kept in its then condition, as a sacred place.

He returned to Vaucluse and Avignon, where he remained until 1352; but Laura was dead: he never had liked Avignon save because she lived there, and he determined to return to Lombardy.

Here he entered into diplomatic duties, mainly for the Milanese Visconti; and, as additional employment, he was placed in charge of the library which the Archbishop Giovanni had established at Padua. He remained in the service of the Visconti ten years.

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Petrarch.*

In 1354, Charles IV., Emperor, invited him to his court, then held at Mantua. Charles had been a great admirer of Petrarch—indeed, the story is told, that in 1346, when at Avignon with his father, Charles had singled out Laura from all the bevy of beauties at the luxurious court of Avignon, and had then and there kissed her, at the expense of arousing the tender jealousy of the poet.

Petrarch was very free in his remarks to Charles upon royal and imperial duties, but the latter took it in gentle part; spoke ever in the most enthusiastic terms of the poet, wishing to have him permanently in his court; the Chancellor of the Empire sending the poet a patent as Count Palatine.

But the days when a court poet was an enviable profession had for a generation gone by, when the Hohenstauffen dynasty failed; and Petrarch possibly did not feel ambitious of a position in which he might find his personal dignity shading off into that of the court jester, and he therefore clung to his loved Italy, and after a lengthy sojourn at Milan, he practically settled at Padua, finally making his home at Arqua.

But, ever restless, and yet ever seeking repose, he betook himself to Venice, then a city of wonderful growth, civilization, and glory.

The Venetians honored him highly; and, by way of grateful return, he presented to the state his library, which became the nucleus of the famous collection of St. Mark's. Another motive for the gift may be found in the fact, that to a restless man, ever changing his domicile, the transportation of such treasures as books were in those days would be a matter of great anxiety. The Venetian Senate also appointed a palace for his residence.

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At this time his relations with Boccaccio became intimate. He used to wear the great prose writer's portrait with his own in a ring; and Boccaccio gave him the works of St. Augustine, Varro, and some of Cicero's, besides copying for his use, with his own hands, Dante's great poem. Indeed, the connection between Petrarch and Boccaccio is one of the purest friendships ever formed between two literary men, and shows to great advantage the lack of small envies in the composition of both men.

Boccaccio successfully procured the reinstatement of Petrarch (1351) as a citizen of Florence, from which place he had been from prenatal days a hereditary exile. The Florentines demanded of the Pope (Urban V., 1365) that the poet be inducted into a can-

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onry, either in Florence or Fiesole. But Petrarch, although appreciating the honor and kindness, declined to return, and ultimately fixed his abode, in 1370, at Arqua, in the Euganean Hills, a short distance from Padua. His last public act was a diplomatic service in the interest of a patron, Francesco Novello da Carrara, Prince of Padua, to settle a dispute with Venice.

After finishing the mission in an honorable but not altogether successful manner, he returned to Arqua, and June 18, 1374, was found dead, sitting in a chair in his library.

His funeral was conducted with all the pomp which appertained to the sepulture of a man who had possessed so great an influence as ecclesiastic, poet, and statesman, his colleagues of the diocese joining with his friend, the reigning Prince of Padua, in doing the honors of his burial.

One feels, on reviewing Petrarch's life and works, continually reminded of Goethe. Both had been educated to the law, but abandoned it as a business full of unsatisfactory sophistry.

Both lived in a revolution of culture. Goethe was not utterly carried away by the Storm-and-Stress flood, but nevertheless its current shook up and kept in movement his

whole being. Petrarch was full of the excitement of the Revival of Letters.

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Both found their bread-and-butter existence practically dependent upon their services to petty princes in fragmentary nationalities; for the Holy Roman Empire was as weak a bond in Italy in the days of Dante and Petrarch as it was four hundred years later, when the French Revolution burst under it and blew it to pieces.

Both were lifted into notice by the poetic expression which they gave to their mental and moral throes and tortures as unsatisfied lovers, the one by his lyric poetry, the other by his "Sorrows of Werther." Had the Italian been able to break away from his passion, or had the German suffered his to become chronic, the parallel would be complete, so far as there could be a likeness between the hale and hearty German and the morbid Florentine.

Both were honored by the great ones of their time, and were characters as well in political as in literary history; and if we examine their daily lives and ambitions, as well as their successes and failures, we may find much in the glorified sage of Weimar which has also its representative trait in him of Padua.

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Although somewhat fanciful and strained, one cannot help seeking what might be parallelisms in the lives of Petrarch and Goethe. I have picked out a few facts which show a certain ratio of coincidence. Goethe has left us more of his work which we can benefit by. Much of Petrarch's labor was of necessity apt only for the time in which he lived; and his productions were formed or deformed in accordance with the mannerisms of that era. Both were successful in their worldly lives—a compensation, in a manner, for the pangs of despised love which both suffered early in life. Here I might refer to Napoleon's famous criticism upon Werther: that an unhappy passion was not, in itself, sufficient reason for suicide; but that a failure in one's career must also supervene to warrant such extreme despair—in brief, that Glory and Fame are the best physicians for a broken heart, Petrarch and Goethe having successfully submitted to the treatment. Had Petrarch not been kept alive by the hopeful brilliancy of the revival of letters, and encouraged by the social regard paid him as a cherished favorite of the Colonnas, or had Goethe seen no grander life before him than that of a snuffy imperial chancery clerk, the burthen of an impossible love might have

seemed to both, as it did to poor Jerusalem,
too heavy to bear.

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PETRARCH.

Family origin: The family of Petrarch's mother was probably more influential than that of his father, Petraccolo. Garzo, Petrarch's paternal grandfather, had something like the municipal *status* of Textor, Goethe's maternal grandfather. Petrarch's mother was a beautiful woman, of lovely disposition.

Petrarch is destined for jurisprudence, but prefers the classics and poets, suffering thereby his father's displeasure; abandons the law when left to his own devices.

Finds his enjoyment in the society of elegant ladies of Avignon. Fastidious in his dress.

Petrarch's dissipation at Avignon.

Petrarch's era the regeneration of classical learning and rivalry of Latin with Tuscan.

LAURA DE SADE.

Sonnets and other Tuscan poems in the lifetime of Laura.

Becomes famous by reason of his Tuscan poems.

Makes the tour of France to forget his passion.

GOETHE.

Maternally descended from Johann Wolfgang Textor, Schultheiss of Frankfort, the family (as well as Goethe's father) being hereditary *gens de la robe*. Goethe's mother was as brilliant in a feminine way as Goethe himself in his.

Goethe's father resents his son's neglect of the law. Goethe barely takes his doctorate degree (?), and never devotes any serious attention to the subject thereafter.

"Willst du genau erfahren was
sich ziemt
So frage nur bei edlen Frauen
an."

Goethe in his young days a thorough fop.

Goethe's wild days at Weimar.

Storm-and-Stress period: the crystallization of the elegant modern High German.

LOTTE BUFF KESTNER.

The Sorrows of Werther.

The wild enthusiasm of Germany over Werther. Goethe's songs marvels of lyric perfection.

Leaves Wetzlar.
Swiss journey.

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Is a protégé of the Colonna family, and the bosom friend of Giacomo, Bishop of Lombes.

Enters diplomatic service under Cardinal Colonna and Pope John XXII.; subsequently ends his career as minister of the Milanese Visconti.

Forms a liaison with some unknown woman, although he still celebrates Laura in his verse. Two children born of the connection.

Receives a patent as Count Palatine of the Roman Empire.

Petrarch's epic and his republican ideas a failure. The following century criticises his Latin style.

Petrarch greatly honored by the Emperor Charles.

Laura in her matronly days comes to be proud of the glory conferred on her by Petrarch's verse, and affects a sentimental friendship for him.

Boccaccio's friendship.

Old age at Arqua. Cultured ease amid books and objects of art, admired by the great and scholarly of his time.

Chaucer's verdict upon Petrarch, as recorded in "The Clerke's Tale."

The Stolbergs, and ultimately Karl August of Weimar.

Appointed Legationsrath, and subsequently promoted.

Becomes the admirer of Baroness von Stein, and has a connection which ultimately ends in a marriage with Christiane Vulpius.

Is ennobled.

Goethe wastes his energy in erroneous theories as to natural science.

Napoleon's interview with Goethe: "*Voilà un homme.*"

Lotte, an old woman, the mother of twelve children, visits Goethe.

Schiller's friendship.

Old age at Weimar. An object of veneration to both his countrymen and strangers.

Thackeray's "*Tantum vidi.*"

In reading Petrarch's letters and noting his personal doings, one is struck with the almost insupportable burthen as a scribe that must have pressed upon him. It would not

be giving too strong an illustration in that regard to suggest the sort of labor which a lad of to-day would undergo if, to reach a liberal education, he were compelled to slavishly copy every author he read in a fair engrossing hand. How many people would have favorite authors in these times if the claim had to be supported by laboriously engrossing them on parchment? What misery the want of paper must have caused! Petrarch used a leather jerkin, which he treated as a sort of note-book when he was out of reach of fitting writing materials, which garment was still in existence in 1527, when it was a prized relic in the hands of the erudite Cardinal Sadoletto. It will be seen what respectable precedent one has for soiling one's cuffs with memoranda. The Vatican has his "Rime" in autograph—a fair copy. At Florence is a transcript by him of certain epistles of Cicero, bound in wood, with iron clasps, the corners of copper, the identical book which so often fell on his unlucky left leg, and came near costing him its amputation.

He forever complains of the unreliability of copyists, who, in those days, received the abuse which we now lavish, deservedly or otherwise, on the printers. The calligraphist was an artist in those times, as was also the

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illuminator, one of whom Dante finds in Purgatory. Petrarch was an elegant scribe. His handwriting was so neat and clear that when, in 1501-2, Aldus Manutius invented the so-called Italic type as an improvement upon black letter, he made it a fac-simile of Petrarch's hand.

It is not always that the grand qualities inherent in a man are the basis of his reputation or fame. Petrarch is a shining example of the weakness of a great mind, proving the connecting sympathetic link binding to him the regard and affection of his fellow-men for a period of centuries in duration.

Laura seems to have been a *grande dame* of the court at Avignon, filling the part of a sort of local queen, with no particular intellectual gifts, probably, but with a complete appreciation of the power of her beauty, and a disposition to set it off as much as possible by an attention to dress and coquettish requirements.

She recognized the advantage of having a great man and poet grovelling at her feet; and it seems that it annoyed her when she ran the risk of losing him. She was selfish about it, however. She granted him no favors. She snubbed him when he effervesced

into indiscretion, and practically and crushingly said, "Messer Petrarca, I am no such woman."

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I' non son forse chi tu credi.

She seems to have been remarkably prolific; and whether she loved her lord or no, she was most of the time in that state in which women who do like to be. There are ten or eleven children mentioned as born of her marriage, and we do not know how many got away. It is singular to notice in that regard how she and Lotte Kestner, Goethe's great passion, are compeers. Now, the spectacle of poor Petrarch, as it were, getting in his tributes of adoration of her person (*p't' b's exhaustum*) in such breathing-spells as were allowed to the midwives, might draw a sneer from lips moulded for sarcasm.

What an opportunity would have been offered for the great modern song-writer of Germany to say something piquant, had he been thrown back five hundred years, in some anachronistic way, and, as a barbarian, have met the demure Laura, swinging through the streets of the Gascon capital on the arm of her noble spouse,

"Eine brave schwangere Frau!"

Of course, we must acquit Laura of any yielding to the poet. She could not have

Francis been imitating that methodical Roman Em-
Petrarch. press, who, when asked why, when she had
so many lovers, her children wore her hus-
band's features, answered—

Numquam nisi navi plena tollo vectorem.

Perhaps, however, if Laura had possessed the quality of ready negotiability in the matter of affections, such as a malign Venus vested in Sordello's Cunizza, it is possible that Petrarch never would have developed as a poet. Gratified love stills the music of men as effectually as of birds. It will be remembered how, when the brother and the lover of Beatrix Esmond discovered her intrigue with the Chevalier, and were uneasy lest she had already yielded, their minds were set at rest by the discovery that the Prince was still in the verse-writing stage of the flirtation. Petrarch never passed from it, in spite of the slanderous hints of Madame Deshoulières. No; Laura was good;

“And whether coldness, pride, or virtue dignify
A woman, so she is good, what does it signify?”

To sentimental souls, I must frankly admit my lack of inclination to crown Laura with the customary nimbus of angelic phosphorescence. She doubtless was extremely good, but not “too good to be unkind,” at

least to her passionate admirer. Of course, as supporters of the ethical dogma of wifely virtue, we ought to feel a glow of enthusiasm at the fact that five centuries ago, under the warm sun of Provence, in a very dissipated capital, and with a crossish sort of husband, a woman was found of such arctic rigor as to return only an iceberg reflection of the flaming glow of her servant's passion; but, at the same time, we may be allowed to cherish a sneaking regret that the garland of poetic blossom—the first of the new growth of modern European civilization—should have brought no response from the lady at whose feet it was laid, save the throwing in the poet's eyes of a shovelful of the ashes of her flickering conjugal fires.

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It was a practical blessing to Petrarch when the Plague eloped with her. It ended his haunting Provence when he should have been in Italy, where he rightfully belonged. For my part, I feel a sense of relief when I come to the poems which record Laura as in Heaven, and her disturbing and baleful influence removed from the gentle canon's existence.

We may pardon Petrarch's morbid passion for Laura. It was a disease that had settled on him in his youth—a rheumatic disorder of

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his blood, which kept him ever in unrest. But his other idols were equally objects of mistaken homage. He believed that Virgil and his Latin predecessors and successors of the classical age were sacred prophets. He worshipped their sandal-strings. He attempted to bring back their language, not as a philological inquiry, not as material in an archaic museum, not as a stage costume, but as a matter of daily habit. He was not alone in his error. Dante and the preceding generation were equally enthusiastic—equally wrong. Ciceronian Latin and Roman Freedom seemed to all the bright intellects of that day, whether pope or king, priest or layman, matters to struggle and strive after, as the theoretical *summum bonum* of earthly polity and culture.

His talk was full of allusions and illustrations from Roman and Grecian history. It forcibly reminds one of the orators of the French Revolution; and, possibly, also of the classical mannerisms of some of our own Revolutionary fathers' stilted effects in speech, which have long ago been abandoned to school-boy rhetoric.

Petrarch, like many an enthusiastic student since his time, was carried off his feet by the voluble graces of Cicero. He esteemed it

true statesmanship to adopt Cicero's opinions. He did his best to write Ciceronian Latin. He, amidst those grim Italian tyrants, who had more of Catiline than of Augustus in their composition, actually tried, as the acme of genius to be attained, to be an orator such as was Cicero, forgetful that Cicero himself, in his vanity as a Roman Consul, was probably more conceited, inwardly, over his petty military success, and his doubtful title of *imperator*, than over his most brilliant civic victories. Petrarch's friend, Dandolo, the Doge of Venice, gave him a rough rebuke in that regard. But if Cicero was a failure when in the glow of life and action, with a Roman Senate behind him as clients, and a populace in front charmed by his wealth of diction, it would not be likely that Petrarch, as a mediæval sorcerer, by sprinkling his fickle ashes and muttering his silvery phrases all over Italy, could invoke the old Roman phantoms of glory. And in so blindly taking Cicero as a model, Petrarch did what he himself reprehends: His opinions were more like pictures of Roman bass-reliefs than like flesh-and-blood descendants of Roman heroes.

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But even Petrarch's mumbling of Ciceronian expressions was not free from criticism.

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Writing a dead language is like solving a mystic fifteen puzzle—a matter of ingenious fitting of mosaic. Petrarch was dab at it; but the succeeding century grew more expert at the game; and Petrarch's stilted hexameters became a matter of about as much literary regard as John Tzetzes' epic balderdash, made out of the splinters of Homer. A work in a dead language can no more be imitated than a stained-glass window can be restored from its fragments, after the art of staining glass has been lost.

Petrarch's Italian verse has long been held above criticism. Perhaps we feel a half-monotonous weariness at the uniformity of a collection of sonnets on one subject, and that a cloying one, when any one of the poems by itself would excite nothing but simple admiration. But one should not read the poet in that way. The proper mode to appreciate Petrarch is to dawdle under the shade of a tree; to sleepily open to any chance page, and to stop after turning the leaf. A sonnet is like an intaglio gem: you must not expect heroic breadth therein; it must be examined with half-shut eyes to bring out its beauties. Many of Petrarch's poems are as fantastic and involved as a parti-colored twist of silk.

But to put a bundle of thoughts into so small a compass as fourteen lines is a task like stowing a lady's robe into a traveller's hand-bag: there must inevitably be some little wrinkling of ideas.

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For the same reason, the difficulty of translating into a foreign language a sonnet which is closely packed in the original becomes insurmountable. Besides, the day of the English sonnet ended with the death of Queen Elizabeth. The poets of that era spoke a language more fitted for the purpose of rendering Petrarch, and they were entitled to take more liberties with the idiom.

Dante's great epic was sparingly commended by Petrarch, who could not fail to note its beauties, and who was the soul of fairness as a critic, even when heavily handicapped with the delusions of his day; but it was in the common tongue, and to him it was admirable only with reservations.

In Petrarch's old age, he produced his "Trionfi." Here, perhaps, by the influence of Boccaccio, he takes Dante somewhat as a model. That these efforts were excellent of their kind, may be seen from the fact that so many modern poets have followed in his wake, and have adopted analogous forms for their poetic art.

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The great wealth of new themes shining in the epics of barbarian Germany, which had found expression in the preceding century, awoke little interest in Petrarch. The music of the Minnesingers and the cycles of Roland and Arthur worked itself into Italian literature two centuries later, when Boiardo, Ariosto, and Tasso found the legends worthy subjects for their verse. Petrarch was unconsciously attempting to bring back the modes of thought and action of the ancient world, forgetful that that world could not be in harmony with Christian tradition and Christian chivalry. Only a Christian gentleman could have suffered or been victimized by such a passion as Petrarch entertained for Laura. A Greek or Roman would not have understood it or its morbid pains ; and Petrarch's political and literary views were out of place as much as was the tribuneship of Rienzi, decked with the gewgaws of mediæval knighthood. For these reasons, Petrarch might well complain,

“Solco onde, e 'n rena fondo e scrivo in vento.”

A striking instance of the mode in which *il gran canonico* was absorbed in his Nirvana of classical contemplation may be drawn from the scanty facts tending to prove his intercourse with Chaucer.

There can be no moral doubt but that Chaucer knew Petrarch personally. They were both in France many times, where they might have met. They were both courtiers. They both had an enthusiasm for scholarship. Whether they met then, or whether Chaucer, when on his visit to Genoa, specially visited the Italian, it does not appear. I do not imagine that a visit by the hearty, beef-eating *Valettus Noster* to the fruit-eating poet of Arqua would have been very cheery as a feast-hunting episode; but the only reason that such a visit could not have occurred lies in the fact that Petrarch himself does not record it. Still, on the other hand, would he have mentioned the visit of a man who was the servant of a barbarous monarch, and whose only claim to notice, literary-wise, was his cultivation of an unknown and uncouth dialect, that was half-bastard French?

I think that we must accept Landor's "Imaginary Conversations," Boccaccio and Petrarch, and then Chaucer as an intervener, as conventional truths, whether direct evidence to support the idea is ever found or not.

Petrarch's patriotism was of the sturdiest order. His hopes were for the return of the Pope to Rome, to the end that the horde of

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petty tyrants who swarmed over Italy, and made it the bloody ground of their aimless and endless brawlings, might be overawed by a strong central power at Rome. He was not averse to a temporal emperor sitting side by side with a spiritual pontiff; but he wished that emperor to be the right hand of Italy, and to fight its battles for a return to supremacy of Roman ideas and the Roman race, as exponents of civilization.

Petrarch was a man of strong, clear, almost sceptical mind. He was a disbeliever in judicial astrology and alchemy—superstitions which clung to western civilization far into the eighteenth century. He saw through the quackery of what its professors were, in those days, pleased to style the medical profession; and by his railleries at its expense, he won the animosity of the guild as deservedly as did Molière three centuries later.

He was so scientifically intelligent that he won from Innocent VI., the ignoramus among the Avignon popes, the reputation (in those days a dangerous one) of being, like his cherished model, Virgil, a sorcerer; and taking one line as a prophecy, we might almost fancy him foretelling the discovery of America:

“Che ’l di nostro vola
A gente che di la forse l’ aspetta.”

To an American, there is something peculiarly attractive in the spectacle of the great poet looking over the Atlantic, straining his eyes to catch a glimpse of another world, bathed in the glories of the setting sun. A hundred years later, Luigi Pulci borrowed and expanded this idea of Petrarch. Charles Sumner, in his "Prophetic Voices About America," notices Pulci, but overlooks Petrarch's precedence. Pulci, however, might have learned at the same source as Columbus.

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Had Petrarch sought riches by the road of mercantile enterprise—and those were the days of mercantile power—he might have founded a family that would have rivalled the Medici, and his declining age would have been spent in an old-gentlemanly fever of enthusiasm over antique gems and coins, and amid a collection of chipped torsos from his pet Roman Imperial days.

Had he, like Sordello, worn a cuirass instead of a cassock, and flourished a sword instead of a censer, he might have sprung into power as a *condottiere*, and, as either the Pope's trusty man-at-arms or the Emperor's legate, have won for his beloved Italy that peaceful unity, prosperity, and stability as a nation which have ever seemed a mirage of

Francis
Petrarch. glory that has shifted away from every Italian patriot in every age, as he has attempted to grasp and detain them.

Petrarch was a great man—above such vanity as caused Rienzi to burst like the fabled frog—sincere and loving in his friendships, a genuine broken-hearted lover, who never took revenge upon his prudish mistress, either in word or deed, and who did not sit down and wither into intellectual apathy because she was not kind. He stood out from his age as pure and symmetrical in character as an antique column left standing amid the ruins of his own dear Rome, after Gothic devastations, to mark a trysting-place for lovers, and a surface whereon to engrave the date of the regenerate birth of classical and philosophical learning in modern Europe out of the mingled ashes of monkish scribes and gallant bards of Provence, and the epitaph of THE LAST AND GREATEST OF THE TROUBADOURS.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL.

It would, of course, be a piece of presumption to attempt any list, either of editions, annotators, or biographers of Petrarch. Marsand, we believe, collected, long ago, a "Biblioteca Petrarchesca" of nine hundred volumes (now at Paris); and the list has been steadily increasing. The best that can be done, therefore (and all that is necessary in an essay like the present), is to note some of the more curious or more popular works or editions which a student of Petrarch may find referred to in his reading.

I.—LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS OF PETRARCH.

WRITTEN IN TUSCAN.

- 1st. SONNETS; written in the lifetime of Laura, 227; after her death, 90. This is exclusive of six sonnets discovered and published by G. Veludo, and one found in the French National Library by M. L. Podhorsky, and the one (alleged to be by Petrarch) found in Laura's tomb.
- 2d. CANZONI; written in Laura's lifetime, 21; after her death, 8.
- 3d. SESTINE; written in Laura's lifetime, 8; after her death, 1.
- 4th. BALLATE; written in Laura's lifetime, 6; after her death, 1.

- Francis* 5th. MADRIGALS (all in Laura's lifetime), 4.
Petrarch. 6th. TRIUMPHS, begun in 1357, left unfinished at the death of the poet. Love, Chastity, Death, Fame, Time, Eternity.

LATIN POEMS.

- 1st. Africa (commenced in 1341; not finished for years after); XII books.
 2d. Bucolicum carmen.
 3d. Epistolae; III books.
 4th. Septem Psalmi Penitentiales; novem confessionales.

ETHICAL OR PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS.

- 1st. Secretum de Contemptu Mundi; III dialogues. De Conflictu Curarum Suarum.
 2d. De Avaritia Vitanda.
 3d. De Otio Religioso; II books; written in consequence of a visit to his brother in a Carthusian convent.
 4th. De Vera Sapientia; II dialogues.
 5th. De Remediis Utriusque Fortunae; commenced in 1358.
 6th. De Vita Solitaria; II books; written for the Bishop of Cavaillon (Vaucluse); commenced as a sketch in 1346; finished in 1366.
 7th. De Sui Ipsius et Aliorum Ignorantiâ; a rebuke to Atheism. 1370.
 8th. Epistola ad Posteritatem.

POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS.

- 1st. De Officiis et Virtutibus Imperatoris.
 2d. Exhortations to Attempt the Recovery of Liberty; to restore peace to Italy.

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| 3d. | Ad Quosdam ex Illustribus Antiquis. | <i>Francis</i> |
| 4th. | De Republica Optime Administrandâ; written for the Prince of Padua. (1373.) | <i>Petrarch.</i> |
| 5th. | Liber Epistolarum sine Titulo (concerning the Papal sojourn at Avignon). | |
| 6th. | Letters; to Humbert, Dauphin of the Viennois (1339); to the Emperor Charles (1350); to Dandolo, Doge of Venice (1351). | |

HISTORICAL.

- 1st. Epitome Illustrium Virorum.
- 2d. De Rebus Memorandis; IV books.
- 3d. Commentarii de Vita Cæsaris (formerly ascribed to Celsus).

MISCELLANEOUS.

- 1st. Itinerarium Syriacum; written on account of the Crusades.
- 2d. Contra Medicum Objurgantem.
- 3d. Invectiva Contra Gallum.
- 4th. Griseldis (translation from Boccaccio).

EPISTOLAE.

- 1st. De Rebus Familiaribus; VIII books.
- 2d. De Rebus Senilibus; XVI books.
- 3d. On various subjects.

II.—EDITIONS.

INCUNABULA.

Tuscan poems, first edition, Venice, 1470 (4to), sold at the Pinelli sale in 1789 for £27 6s. Rome, 1471; Padua, 1472; Rome, Milan, and Venice, 1473; Basle, 1474; Bologna (Filelfo), 1476; Brussels, 1477; Venice (black letter), 1478; Venice, 1481; Venice (black letter), 1484; Venice, 1486-88; Padua, 1490; Venice, 1492-94.

(Filelfo) Venice, 1500-1515; ALDUS (Bembo, editor), 1501, '14, '21, '33, '46. Giunti, Florence, 1510, 1515, or 1522; Paganino, Venice, 1516; Da Bologna, 1516; Gesualdo, 1533, also 1553.

Velutello, Venice, 1545, '47, '60; Bruccioli, Venice, 1548; Daniello da Lucca, Venice, 1549; Dolce, Venice, 1554; Bembo, Lione, 1574; Castelvetro, Basil, 1582; with illustrations of Porro, Venice, 1600; Tassoni, Modena, 1711; Tassoni, Muzio, and Muratori, Venice, 1722; Padua (with portrait of author), 1732; Zapato de Cisneros, Venice, 1756; Muratori, Modena, 1762; Bodoni, Parma, 1804; Pisa (portrait by Morghen), 1805; MARSAND, Padua, 1819-20; variorum notes, Padua, 1837; Leopardi, 1847.

Miniature Ed., Pickering, London, 1822.

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Lives of the Popes and Emperors, Florence, 1478; Book of Famous Men, Verona, 1476; Bucolics, Da Imola, Venice, 1516; Basil Edition (Latin and Italian), 1554-81; Geneva, 1601.

III.—BIOGRAPHY.

Villani, Vergerio, the two Aretinos, Polintono, Manetti; all of whom, Campbell says, were more eulogists than anything else.

Squarciafico; VELUTELLO; Lelio dei Lei (the descendant of Petrarch's friend); NICCOLINI;

Gesualdo; Beccadelli; TOMMASINI; MURATORI; Francis
Bimard; Bandini; DE SADE, 1764; Arnaud; *Petrarch.*
Mehus; Baldelli; Levati; Marsand; Guinguéné;
Menage, 1690; Nicéron, 1734.

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des Deux Mondes, June, 1847; Gazzera, Turin
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RAPHY, Rosetti, Trieste, 1828.

IV.—ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS.

Howard, Earl of Surrey; Drummond of Haw-
thornden; Sir Thomas Wyatt, the elder. (See
Harrington's *Nugae Antiquae*.)

Tryumphes of Fraunces Petrarche, by Henry
Parker, Knyght, Lord Morley, London, John
Cawood (4to), (*n. d.*), 52 leaves; only four copies
known.

Phisicke against Fortune, Thomas Twyne, 1579.

Visions of Petrarch, by Edmund Spenser.

Triumphs, by Mrs. Anna Hume, Edinburgh,
1644.

Seaven Penitential Psalmes, Geo. Chapman,
1612. (Very scarce. See Collins' *Bibliographical*
Account of Early Eng. Lit.)

Life of Petrarch (with some translations), Tytler
(Lord Woodhouselee), 1810.

Sonnets and Triumphs, by Geo. Henderson,
1803.

Triumphs, Rev. Henry Boyd, 1807.

Selections, by the Translator of *Catullus* (Nott),
1808.

Sonnets, Wrangham, 1817.

Petrarque et Laure (romance), Madame de
Genlis, London, 1819.

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Petrarch.*

Sonnets, Lord Charlemont, Dublin, 1822.

Translations, Barbarina Wilmot (Lady Dacre),
1836. Lady Dacre is the sweetest of all modern
translators.

Sonnets, Susan Wollaston, 1841.

Odes, by Macgregor, 1851.

Bohn's Illustrated Library, 1859.

V.—ENGLISH BIOGRAPHIES, SKETCHES, AND ESSAYS.

Gibbon, Decline and Fall, chapter LXX.

Susannah Dobson, 1775.

Penrose, sketch, 1790.

Sir Wm. Jones.

Foscolo, Essays (also No. 48 of Quarterly),
1823.

Montgomery, Lives of Literary Men of Italy,
1835.

Thos. Campbell, 1841.

Alger, 1867; Brydges (Imaginative Biography),
1820; Buckley (Dawning of Genius); Dele-
pierre (Historical Difficulties); Greene (Historical
Studies), 1850.

Macaulay, Later Essays; Mrs. Shelley.

Reeve, (1878); Fraser's Magazine, Vol. LXIV;
McMillan's (Miss C. M. Phillimore), Vol. XXVIII;
Contemporary Review, 1874 (July); Athenaeum,
July, 1874; Nat. Q. Review, June, 1873.

Mrs. Jameson (Loves of the Poets); Landor
(Imaginary Conversations).

Higginson, in the Atlantic, 1867, Sunshine and
Petrarch.

Longfellow, Poets and Poetry of Europe.

ALFRED TENNYSON, POET LAUREATE.

“Mein Lied ertönt der unbekannten Menge ;
Ihr Beifall selbst macht meinem Herzen bang.”



TENNYSON enjoys at least a titular popularity in America. If that needed confirmation, the unremitting piracy of his works would furnish it. In one or more forms, they may be found in all polite households ; charming ladies the world over will, if urged, gratify you by singing his lyrics ; clever, penniless young bachelors everywhere will, when jilted, mouth stanzas of “Locksley Hall” ; and chaps with ill-balanced hearts, who have become unhappily spooney about their friends’ wives, will half imagine themselves Lancelots or Tristrams ; while village Guineveres are as plentiful as village Cromwells, and not always as guiltless in their particular *pose*. Has not the poor, pale corpse of the Lily Maid been bandied about among us of the Pacific Coast as recklessly as if it were a mummy in a museum or a “stiff” on an express train ? Who shall say

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that we do not know our poet intimately? and what is there that a prosy essayist out here can tell us in that behalf?

And yet, one feels that there is a certain sediment of *méfiance* pervading the half-cultured strata of the American reading public, which hinders the Englishman's verse from thorough assimilation with the popular American nature. It is almost as if a taste for Tennyson were an exotic, requiring greenhouse fastidiousness to protect it from rude republican northers.

This literary symptom (not, however, exactly confined to Tennyson) has been growing apparent in the last twenty years. Former generations not only courted British culture, but found it a necessity. To-day there is arising an actual aversion to British ideas—at least, in what may be called the superficial literary populace.

The fact is, Great Britain is becoming foreign to us. Like the Irish, our literary state is conspiring for Home Rule, and clamors for a parliament of its own. We dislike to be thought to speak the English rather than the American language. Even in our pronunciation and modulation, there is a sibboleth apparent; and we gird at the Britisher who has not our speech, however provincial it be, just

as country louts are amused at a stranger's costume or special habits of body. Usages once common to both lands are fast wearing out with us; and a time would seem to be coming when English and American, once identical, will be to each other as Japanese unto Chinese.

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An evidence of the divergence between the two countries is furnished by the fading popularity (regard being had to the increase of population and relative greater percentage of general readers) of English authors once as eagerly conned in America as in the land of their domicile. This partly arises from the confused ideas of superficially educated Americans as to British customs, usages, and local terms—a defect which renders the reading of British writers a matter of painful thought, more or less clogged with ignorance and uncertainty as to the allusions. I do not think Scott as popular in America as formerly; Burns is actually archaic; and Hogg requires more than a glossary, even to smartish people who are ordinarily swift to catch the slang current in bar-rooms and mining camps, as crystallized in local or humorous journalism.

All this is a weakness to be deplored. If our literature had become so broad and deep, by reason of its Longfellows, its Hawthornes, its

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Irvings, its Howellses, and its Holmeses, there might be ground for national pride in our literary progress; but the generation that knows not Joseph also forgets Joseph's brethren and sympathizers on this side the ocean; and is apt to be satisfied with thought, poetry, or humor scenting of no higher taste than might be bred in the cabin of the Arkansas Traveller. The literature chosen to supplant English models must be better, not worse, than what has been cast upon us by British descent.

Then, too, it happens that, while we are moving farther from British influence, we are drawing closer to lands which foster the alienation. Our young folks are running the risk of knowing more about Zola than about Thackeray; and our æsthetic ladies are more interested in Mademoiselle de Maupin than in the Vicar of Wakefield's Olivia. And yet they might draw a personal benefit from the good taste and elegance of Goldy, which their quavering knowledge of a foreign tongue must ever be a barrier to their finding or appreciating in Gautier.

If, therefore, I sermonize a while about an author whom all ought to appreciate, gentle or simple, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, it is but to repeat an Old-World echo of instruction which distance and a murky literary at-

mosphere have almost weakened to unintelligibility. I would like to discuss Tennyson in the light in which cultivated people in his own country regard him and his works, as shown by commentators in magazines or published volumes.

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The life of Alfred Tennyson has not been one of startling events. There are no prominent facts in his career hurtled about as literary gossip which would render his biography a dramatic poem. Save for the fact that he is a poet, and poet laureate, his existence has been passed in the elegant obscurity affected by cultured Englishmen who keep out of politics.

His poetry, in one sense, is not egoistic, and he has shrunk from breaking up the privacy of his life to build the materials into the structure of his poetic reputation.

But, for all that, everything that we need to know, or perhaps ought to wish to know, of Tennyson is in his writings, if we will but "read between the lines." For that matter, I would challenge any man with the slightest claim to frankness to write anything at all without confessing some portion of his nature. I remember how a gentleman of old California days came to his death by shipwreck.

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His general reputation had been of decidedly misanthropic acerbity. None gave him credit for especial warmth of feeling. Yet with death not a quarter of an hour away, he attempted an autographic will, of half a dozen lines, which, by its kindness of tone towards children, strangers to his blood, and towards collaterals by the preciseness of his chirography and punctuation, by the aptness of terms, and the fact that one of them was Scotch, gave indirectly the materials for a biography of a frosty but kindly nature, bred in the Land o' Cakes, in a lawyer's office, thence transferred to journalist duties on a distant shore, of as heroic a soul as one would expect to dwell in the breast of even the *vieux militaire* who sank with him. In like manner, one might compose a charming history of Tennyson by stringing together verses from his poems; and one might also branch out and show not only what has been, but what might have been—a feature wanting in most biographies. One might mistake a detail here and there, it is true; but the general truth would be told.

ALFRED TENNYSON was born August 5, 1809, at Somersby, a village in Mid-Lincolnshire. Even Americans have heard of the Lincolnshire Fens; and every poem of Tennyson's

youth tells of some feature of the scenery of the land, the verdure and foliage of meadow, marsh, and wood, the brook that flows by Somersby, the mill upon it,

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“The sandy tracts,
And the hollow ocean ridges roaring into cata-
racts.”

For here the German Ocean has full sweep, and seems to enjoy its gambols. It is in Lincolnshire that the poet has laid the scene of his latest drama, “The Promise of May.”

Tennyson’s father, Dr. George Clayton Tennyson, was rector of the parish of Somersby. The poet’s mother was the daughter of the Rev. Stephen Fytche.

Tennyson comes of gentle stock. Indeed, some of the collateral branches must have been quite tenacious and precise in the matter of their claims in that regard. There are, I believe, extinct baronies lying around, here and there, in the family history. Those Englishmen are proud of nothing so much as springing from an old county family ; and I have no doubt but that Tennyson has a proper weakness that way, befitting a man who need not be his own grandfather, and who is grandfather to others. Of course, he has his quiet thrusts at pride of birth ; but behind them remains, evidently, the feeling which, while

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covered by indifference to the pomps of heraldry, borders on satisfaction that he, also, might, had he willed it so,

“Somewhere beneath his own low range of roofs
Have also set his many-shielded tree.”

The entire Tennysonian household were poets — “a nest of nightingales,” as one of their friends calls them. There was Charles, who afterward took the surname of Turner, Frederick, Septimus, Edward, Horatio, and Arthur ; and there were two sisters who likewise made girlish attempts at verse.

One can readily picture the youth of the poet spent in an English rectory, swarming with sisterly and cousinly maidens ; such, doubtless, as Trollope, and the artists who have illustrated Trollope, have depicted for us. No ordinary nature could pass through that sort of training without a certain wincing softness that would give tone to his whole after-existence. It may therefore be noted, that all of Tennyson’s heroines, of whatever race, time, or clime, are, morally, just such people as one would likely meet in an English country house on long, summer days, book in hand, or in a parish church at Christmas-tide, helping the curate with the evergreens, or flirting in demure style with the lads home from college or London.

Tennyson's father was a man of accomplishments—more, perhaps, than of scholarship or of theological propensities. He was an athlete, a musician, a linguist. It would seem that the poet learned Italian to some extent—possibly induced by his father. In those days there was a breeze of revival of interest in Italian letters, owing to the fact that England had become a refuge for a number of lettered revolutionists, such as Foscolo, Panizzi, and Rossetti; and Tennyson's short-lived friend Hallam was gliding into the Tuscan groove of culture, with no mean promise of future effectiveness and honor in that direction.

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Tennyson's *status* in life pointed vaguely to the Anglican Church as his possible vocation; but it was fortunate that he escaped being a parson. I fancy that his brother Charles would have lived a more rounded and complete life had he never taken orders. Besides, one never sees "Reverend" before an author's name without expecting something goody-goody and narrow. Alfred might have been driven into the inns of court; but one shudders at the thought that the brow now decked with laurel should have run the risk of perspiring in a horse-hair wig, although poets, and true ones, *have* sat on the bench and

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been its ornaments. *Testibus*, Sir William Jones, Talfourd, and, for that matter, many a Scotch laird. And is there not Browning, who by rights ought to have been a Q. C., chopping up, say, the law of remainders in a court of equity, instead of knitting his brows and frowning in a lord-chancellor way on high Parnassus?

The only other employment in which Tennyson, according to our present lights, would not have cut a moderate figure, would have been the army. What a jovial mess member he would have been! How he would have shirked drill and pipe-clay! What rollicking camp songs he would have composed and sung! What a popular colonel he would have grown to be! And how religiously and simultaneously he would have hated and abused the French, and have seen that the mess port was of the right body and flavor! He would have been just in time to go out to the Crimea and to take part with his Six Hundred there, instead of singing their exploits in slippered feet at home, where his big bass voice, fit to call a squadron to advance, was utterly thrown away on Boots and the butler. (There was, by the way, another Englishman who would have graced any branch of the service, but

whose life was wasted on art—poor George Cruikshank.)

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It might here be noted that when certain Crimean heroes came home, and were called to receive their academic brevets from Oxford, 1855, in the shape of doctorates in jurisprudence, Tennyson was joined with them in the honors for his poetic gallantry.

No; I don't think that "Major-General Sir Alfred Tennyson, K. C. B.," etc., etc., would sound badly. But if it were the present fact, what a loss to us on this side of the Atlantic, who have, lo, these many years, enjoyed and stolen his work so remorselessly!

Tennyson's physical, mental, and moral nature and needs are those of a man enjoying active, every-day life, with a right to take long furloughs from it, and retreat into his library as occasion demands; apt to linger in cosey discussion "across the walnuts and the wine," when the ladies had cleared out; to sit on a stile and remark a colt's points; to take a languid interest in turnips and crop rotation; and to have interchange of proper courtesies with suspected poachers on the subject of wood-craft, or with the pretty farmers' daughters touching their swains. In America there is somehow a lack among literary men of that sort of catholicity of intercourse;

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and my idea of the blessed Longfellow has always been of one who had the New England college tutor thoroughly injected into his marrow at an early age, and who would have been fearful of saying or doing anything hostile to varnished boots or academic discipline.

The two brothers, Charles and Alfred, were early sent to the Louth grammar school. It was here that in March, 1827, they jointly published a small volume of verse, entitled "Poems by Two Brothers." It was stated in the preface that the pieces contained in the volume had been written by them between their fifteenth and eighteenth years.

This little collection has become a great bibliomaniac rarity. The late Rev. Dr. Chapin, of New York, was said to possess the only copy ever brought to America.

Criticism of verse attempts by young school-boys would, of course, be idle; but the fact of the publication may simply be marked, as showing at how early an age and with what apparent success the poet had put in practice his studies of the laws of English rhythm.

In 1829, the two poetic lads went to reside at Cambridge, whither young Hallam had preceded them some months, with whom Alfred contracted the warmest of friendships,

strengthened, as it was to be, by an engagement between one of the poet's sisters and Hallam.

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Within half a year from his entry at Trinity College, Alfred was declared the successful competitor for the Chancellor's Gold Medal for English verse—the subject imposed being Timbuctoo.

The name recalls the famous witty and successful attempt of Sydney Smith to find a rhyme for it, and invokes something of the grotesque in our feelings; but if we consider what gorgeous speculations were then rife as to the resources and condition of Central Africa, and the fabulous tales in vogue about its cities and their treasures, it would seem natural enough that a question of such great geographical interest should have been suggested as the subject for verse.

A couple of years before, an adventurous British officer had lost his life in attempting to gain personal knowledge of Timbuctoo.

Prize poems have, I think, been rather unjustly abused. But if they have no other *raison d'être*, one might now be found in the fact that Tennyson had buckled down to the task of competing for a prize, and had succeeded so well that the effort became the hinge of his poetic reputation. And it would

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appear, too, that there was a brilliant set of students at Cambridge in those days, when Tennyson bore the banner of success, and young Hallam and Thackeray were among the defeated candidates. In looking over the names of eminent Englishmen who at that time resided at Cambridge, as undergraduates or otherwise, one cannot help thinking that there was there transpiring what we Westerners would call an "intellectual boom." It is not necessary here to discuss the merits of "Timbuctoo"; but it is not out of place to call the attention of San Franciscans to the way in which the young Cantab, who had never felt the shudder of an earthquake, hits off the salient suggestions elicited by the experience :

"As when in some great city when the walls
Shake, and the streets with ghastly faces thronged
Do utter forth a subterranean sound."

There are but three lines; but the phenomenon is fully described.

The *Athenæum* declared that the poem "indicated first-rate poetical genius, and would have done credit to any man that ever wrote."

In 1830, Tennyson published a volume entitled "Poems, Chiefly Lyrical." Of this collection there appeared in the *Westminster*

for January, 1831, a review, written, it is said, by John Stuart Mill, wherein, after defining the duty, influence, and power of a true poet, the following prophetic passage occurs:

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“If our estimate of Mr. Tennyson is correct, he, too, is a poet; and many years hence may he read his juvenile description of that character, with the proud consciousness that it has become the description and history of his own work.”

Leigh Hunt, also, in the *Tatler*, gave a favorable review of the volume, in conjunction with one published simultaneously by Charles Tennyson; and Arthur Hallam wrote a notice of his friend's venture, which appeared in the *Englishman's Magazine*.

Kit North, in his breezy way, clinched the strain of eulogy in *Blackwood's* (May, 1832), mixing kind encouragement with a certain amount of critical banter. In acknowledgment of this latter notice, Tennyson wrote the lines, “Musty, Fusty Christopher,” which appeared in a second volume published in the winter of 1832-33, by the poet-publisher, Moxon.

This second volume was discussed by Coleridge in *Table-Talk*; and the veteran brings the singular charge against the young poet of a mismanagement of his metres, recom-

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mending him to stick to two or three common ones. Now, Coleridge knew all about rhythm, and meant to be a fair critic; but in the light of Tennyson's rhythmical history, we cannot fail to suspect the justice of all poetical criticism.

As adverse utterances, that of the *Quarterly* (July, 1833) is the most noticeable. It found all the weak chords in Mr. Tennyson's lyre; and spoke distrustfully and scornfully of many others, since acknowledged to be strong. The *Quarterly*, in after years, manfully retracted its hasty opinion.

But out of the collections thus far published by the young man, enough pieces stood their ground to entitle the author to take decided rank as a poet.

The year 1833 was the year of young Hallam's death—that Hallam who had been more than a brother to a poet who knew the worth of sympathetic fraternity; and to Hallam's memory, seventeen years later, Tennyson unveiled the most graceful literary monument that could be raised to the memory of a friendship cut short by death.

The time had now come when the poet could not be allowed to rest confidently upon ancient models, or to find a large enough

world in the limits of a college quadrangle. He had become a man; and whatever life men of his day led would be, if not his own, at least a strong agency in marking out his pathway for him. The most "offish" of us are affected to some extent by those about us; and we cannot wholly avoid the vices of our day and generation, even if we would.

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If any one would like to frame an idea of *quasi* fine literary society in England between 1830 and 1840, he has only to study the ways and doings of coteries such as Lady Blessington's, and simultaneously to read Disraeli's novels. From our standpoint, it was a very good sort of life to keep out of; and Tennyson, in spite of some quavering motions, must have remained on the utter rim. It was a time when men had pallid brows and long hair and brocade dressing-gowns, and were suspected of corsets, and had a glory of soft, white hands, innocent of blisters and gauded with rings; a reign of Pelhams and Count d'Orsays in drawing-rooms; a time of *Annals*, and *Books of Gems*, and *Keepsakes*, and *Friendship's Offerings*—all illustrated with plates and engraved titles, and to which contributed languourous gentlemen, whose fathers had sparred with Jackson and fought with bargemen, and whose sons, in their

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subsequent day, took to club-swinging and foot-racing; dainty volumes, patronized by impossible copper-plate beauties, who wrote watery verse, and flirted with the Melbournes and the Endymions of the hour.

I have said that Tennyson somehow escaped all that—the glamour whereof led captive the soul of the future tory leader, and made him, as a reward for his appreciative worship, like Joseph in Egypt, a ruler among strangers to his blood. But Tennyson did contribute to the annuals; and one of the most exquisite bits of his verse, afterwards embodied in “Maud,” first saw light in one of those fashionable collections.

But Tennyson must have studied in one direction—that of nature—with no careless attention. No poet can effectively pursue his calling if deprived of the essentials of outdoor life and pure air. He needs the odors and harmonies of the country to guide him in tuning his harp. He cannot shut himself up in a city without more or less vulgarizing his muse, and rendering his imagery paltry. He cannot bar out the world of sensuous force by closing his library door without growing fastidious and finical. What would Scott have been but for his stumbling strolls through the heaths, with Maida at his heels?

What sort of verse would Byron have written, had he not found the sea a place to revel in? I think the real obstacle which shunted Lamb off the poetic highway was his intense cockneyism. He had it in him to be a poet, and would have been one, had he been compelled to rest his eyes upon beds of wild flowers instead of shop windows and book-stalls.

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Tennyson, all his life, has continued the habit, which he had commenced in his Lincolnshire boyhood, of illustrating his verse with suggestions from nature. He is so fond of the trick, and is so full of surprises of that kind, that his critics have taken to carping at the accuracy of his facts. Bayard Taylor speaks of some of his similes as inapt, and instances where he compares the rippling, broken gurgles of a girl's laughter to a woodpecker's tapping. I fancy it is a question, not of the tapper, but of the sounding-board. Some kinds of woods when struck give an almost liquid response. Another critic objects to the poet's making a dog leap from the water to the land, and shake his ears as he recovers his balance. This critic says a dog does not leap but climbs ashore, and waggles his entire body before attending to his dripping ears. Now, it is true that if the dog were

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in the act of swimming, he would not leap; but if it were a shallow brook, he would make a quick jump from the one element to the other; and if he had pendent ears they would likely be wet when his back would be dry. Indeed, the jump itself would shake his ears. I would hardly be willing to admit that Tennyson was an inaccurate or near-sighted observer in matters of natural phenomena; and he is certainly possessed of an immense fund of forest-and-field wisdom.

Tennyson did not issue any new volumes, after Hallam's death, until 1842, although, as before mentioned, verses by him appeared in the annuals.

Those who have read the lately published volume of letters to and by Miss Mitford will remember the energetic scorn which she evinces for those who write but do not read. Tennyson had no such conceit of self-evolution. He has written sparingly and read diligently.

The nine years of comparative silence were undoubtedly with him a period of study. His mental structure was being "fed with lime," drawn from the nourishment furnished by masters in poetry; and he had completely ac-

quired his virile strength by cautious exercise of his powers, when, in 1842, he published a new edition of his poems in two volumes (re-published the same year by Ticknor, Boston), from which it may be shown that by that time he had adopted the essential features of his mature style, whereon the success of his literary career has been based.

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The epic idyll is there represented by the "Morte d'Arthur"; "Dora" stands as a model of his other idyllic efforts; "Locksley Hall," "Ulysses," "The Day-Dream," "Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere," "Break, Break, Break," and "Come not when I am dead," are all typical in their several manners of Tennyson.

Tennyson was recognized thenceforth as a poet. It must not, however, be lost sight of that, literary-wise, his lines had fallen in pleasant places. His antecedents were all of cultured dignity. He had been the honored nursling of a venerable academy of learning. His friends were brilliant in their ways of thought, and stood manfully by him. The reviews had been kind to him in the main, and the portals of the temple of fame, if not staring open, were at least ajar for his coming.

In 1845, Wordsworth, too great-minded to be afraid of his newly created peer, pro-

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nounced Tennyson to be "decidedly the first of our living poets."

Had Tennyson followed in the wake of Keats, with whom at an early period he was frequently compared, he would only have intensified his model until his exaggerations became defects. Keats might have been, perhaps, a good companion, but not a master. The secret to rival Keats in his special class of merits would best be solved by poring over the writers of the days of Queen Bess. These, the Laureate seems in his youth to have studied and understood. Here I would note the precocity of the poet. With most of us, the thoughts of great authors need to be subjected to successive winnowings through our minds at intervals of years. We do not obtain all that is precious at one reading or at one period in our lives. But Tennyson would seem to have extracted every beauty of style at one sifting, and to have deftly worked every grain of knowledge so acquired into his own mass.

Gladstone regards Tennyson's Homeric and Dantesque studies as at one time scanty; but Gladstone has been cultivating the Homeric field for more than fifty years, with a fine-toothed rake; and any ordinary knowledge on the subject would to him probably appear

defective. I am afraid, too, that, however strong may be the Premier's friendship for the Laureate, the former does not quite follow the latter throughout his entire poetic labyrinth. There is, however, one piece of evidence in favor of Gladstone's slur upon Tennyson's Homeric shortcomings: when the poet makes Ulysses address his old companions with a request to sail with him again out into the west, had he had Homer in his mind, he would have been aware that all those brave souls—Greenwich Pensioners, so to speak—had gone to Hades; and that it would be necessary to ship a fresh crew of merely ordinary seamen. Probably he preferred to err with Dante, who knew not the Odyssey, relying for the success of his paraphrase of the Italian upon its being marvellously true to Homeric spirit, if faulty in incident.

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Mr. Stedman, in his elaborate chapters upon Tennyson, seeks to draw a general parallel between the Victorian age, of which Tennyson stands forth as the poet, and the Ptolemaic or Alexandrian period of Greek literature. It does seem to me strange that, in this age of critical literary research and revamping of old material, more has not been done to bring into direct popularity the authors of that cultivated era. Fox, I think, is said to have

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preferred the "Argonautica" of Apollonius to Homer himself. Macaulay admired the poem; and it would be no ungraceful task for some ambitious young scholar of to-day to attempt a metrical translation of the work.

Tennyson, in dawdling about old country houses and their libraries, seems to have fallen upon many an old volume of the classics not usual in university examinations. Mr. Stedman thinks that, because there was a new edition of Bion and Moschus in print during Tennyson's Cambridge years, his attention must have been thereby attracted to those authors. It may be so; but one would prefer to believe that he rummaged the authors out of some old collection in cracked covers, worm-eaten and mouldy, led thereto by some apt quotation which lingered in his mind as a sample of what a search would bring forth; and that, having hunted down his author, he devoured him, more with literary hunger than academic or scholarly ambition. There are in Tennyson refined echoes of Quintus Calaber, Tryphiodorus, and other dust-covered old worthies, editions of whose works were published in days when men had more time, and did more than merely pretend to read.

There is one elegance which Tennyson seems to have caught early from Virgil.

Sainte-Beuve joins with Fox in admiring Virgil for his power to infuse his own originality into his most exact imitations of his Greek predecessors. From Virgil, Tennyson's mode of paraphrase comes, employed almost always by him in a most felicitous way.

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He has an art, too, of adopting the epithets already applied to objects by older writers—the giving to things, as it were, their christened names. And it has a very happy effect upon the mind of the reader. For, if he be familiar with the godfather, a double set of imagery is thrown upon his mental retina—or rather, like a dissolving view, the old idea, recalled momentarily by the epithet, fades softly into the glory of the new thought brought in by the later poet.

It would be curious to gather together a vocabulary of all the classical phrases for which Tennyson has furnished pat English equivalents.

Although transferring to English passages from Latin, Greek, and Italian poets seems to have been a recreation for which Tennyson has a particular affection, it is not, however, original with him. From Chaucer down, it has been common with English poets—learned by them from Italian writers, perhaps, and originated with the Latins. The famous lines

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of Catullus, in his epithalamium upon Manlius and Julia—" *Ut flos in septis*"—probably taken originally from Sappho, have been appropriated or imitated by Tasso, Ariosto, Jacques Gohorry, Spenser, and Jonson, to say nothing of out-and-out translations by others. Byron has the same taste.

Tennyson has used more than once a passage from Homer—

"Where falls not hail or rain or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly—"

which he found that Lucretius had used before him; and which Dante has also worn as a gem—"a jewel five words long." *

Americans of casual Latinity cannot quite appreciate how vividly the verse of Virgil lingers in the minds of English lads, be they ever so indolent at study.

With the English gentleman, Virgil is a sacred book—verbally inspired. There is nothing in America similar to the reverence hitherto paid it by the Briton of culture, unless, perhaps, the devotion of the old-fashioned, square-shouldered American, in the good days gone by, to the English Bible. (I fancy that it is to the familiarity thereby

* "Perche non pioggia, non grando, non neve
Non rugiada, non brina piu su cade—"
Purg. xxi.

obtained with the genuine English tongue that we are indebted for any purity of speech left. As for Webster's spelling-book, we may thank it for the metallic phonograph sounds which bewray us all over the world. Why could it not have been fated that some Scotchman or Irishman should have struck the tuning-fork of our American orthoëpy?)

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I doubt if Virgil would not be the first thought, on the subject of poetry, of every Englishman who went to school fifty years ago. He was almost confessedly Tennyson's, as shown by his summarized judgment of the poet in his Mantuan ode, published the other day. Virgil is the patron saint of our five hundred years of Renaissance, and Tennyson closes the dynasty of its high priests.

From Virgil to Theocritus, so far as idyllic poetry is concerned, is but a step. Virgil's shield is the same as that of Theocritus, only with the difference of a Latin field instead of a Greek one; and what Tennyson failed to find in Virgil he sought in the "Sicilian Shepherd."

But it would be useless to set forth all the paths of labor which the poet has travelled in his reading to glean material wherewith to enrich his muse. Even in his most fervid and off-hand efforts, he has apparently first

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racked his memory for a model or a suggestion. The "Charge of the Light Brigade" recalls, by a line or two (suppressed, I believe), the ancient Greek revolutionary song of Harmodios and Aristogeiton, showing how Tennyson had cast about him for a precedent in the past. Tennyson's sources of literary culture may principally be found in Greek, Latin, Italian, and English literature. He hardly seems to be attracted to French; and if he does use that tongue, it is probably the form known as Duke-of-Wellington French—a speech which came to be popular after Waterloo.

The Laureate, whatever liberality there may be in his character, is an Englishman. He does not belong to that class of elastic cosmopolites, who, in whatever land they may be, give the impression that they were born elsewhere. He believes thoroughly in British insulation; and in company the other day with a numerous assembly of the nobility and gentry, signed the Channel protest, wishing it to be of record that he for one believed in maintaining those bulwarks of British glory—the Channel fleet and seasickness.

"God bless the narrow seas!
I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad."

Tennyson does not show any faith in the modern hexameter; and he has a sneer for the German article—probably as found in Voss. He may not be partial to German literature: save in “Maud” (and possibly not there), he scarcely indicates any German reading. When he was young, German scholarship in England was meagre. It was only when Carlyle, by force and arms, compelled attention to it, that a knowledge in that direction became common. De Quincey, for philosophical uses, studied the tongue; Coleridge and Shelley took hold of it for poetry’s sake; Walter Scott translated Goetz von Berlichingen. But in the early part of the century, besides his unsavory “Monk,” a knowledge of German was the only recommendation to literary notice that Matthew Lewis could assert. Nowadays, almost any clever English girl (leaving out her brother, Macaulay’s school-boy) is supposed to be able to read Schiller.

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It would not be wise to contradict an opinion on the subject of verse melody originating with the poet. His ear has been too long in the training of harmonious sounds to be distrusted; but though there is a deal of sibilation in Voss’s hexameters, it gives, after all, a seething, swishing spatter to the verse that

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sounds of the Baltic waves, and remotely of Homer and the Ægæan.

One test of excellence, if it be a test, has been tried again and again upon Tennyson. It is the transferring of his poems by scholars into Latin verse. At this amusement, some of the noted Latinists in England have tried their hands. I noticed, some months since, a translation into Greek of the pretty song in "The Cup." Such *jeux d'esprit* show how affectionately he is regarded by the scholarly portion of the rising generation in England. Tennyson is the only English author besides Shakspeare and Milton who has been found worthy of a concordance. Samuel Rogers, with all his wealth to gild his claims as poet, could never have invaded the hearts of artists of brush and pencil as Tennyson has done, nor could he have ever furnished such inspiration for their work.

Tennyson's attitude towards his critics and the public has ever been one of patient humility. It is rare that he shows any restive anger. One or two poems have an indignant sound; and on one occasion—namely, towards Bulwer—he did exhibit temper, which,

notwithstanding the provocation, he has since no doubt regretted.

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I am nowise sure, however, that Bulwer's "Miss Alfred" was not a beneficial sneer, after all. There *was* a general tone and perfume of *boudoir* elegance pervading his then published poems, which, agreeable under certain conditions, might have become too much of a good thing. And, besides, some of his early poems—for example, "O Darling Room"—are quite too awfully nice to escape brutal critics. The fact is, that a minstrel's listeners must be mailed knights as well as gentle ladies; and he must sing accordingly, if he would not be relegated to the companionship of the idolized pianist and limp curate—objects of mysterious interest to the feminine heart, but unloved by coarser males.

In response to Bulwer's rasping mention of him, Tennyson gave one deep-chested howl of ire (just to show his critic that he had been nudging an *Ursus horridus* instead of a sentimental girl), and then trimmed his style to avoid a similar reproach in the future.

He has, in fact, used criticism very much as painters use a mirror, to verify or discover errors in drawing or color.

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In the earlier volumes, Tennyson appended exegetical notes, here and there, to bring the reader into better intelligence with the verse. There was too much of it in some instances, and he ultimately veered to the other extreme, and dropped notes of any kind. We all have laughed heartily at Thackeray's burlesque upon "Timbuctoo," which was printed in the "Snob" of university days; and one of the most amusing features of the squib is the wealth of exegesis appended. To avoid the error there satirized, Tennyson stripped his poems of all prose explanation. I do not know that such a course is always commendable. For my own part, I find it very comfortable to be bolstered up by marginal commentary. There is more wit, philosophy, and information in Byron's autograph elucidation of his own works than in many authors' texts.

And in this connection, would it not be a good idea if some clever American editor, who would not mind being a thief, should publish an edition of Tennyson with a running commentary made up with excerpts, more or less apposite or true, from the criticisms which have appeared of our poet, from "Musty, Fusty Christopher" down to the latest date, together with all the parallel passages marked by admirers or foes? It would

do Tennyson no harm, and might stir up a closer spirit of examination, and consequent better appreciation of his merit and power. Something in the nature of an annotated edition was at one time contemplated in England.

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The author of "A New Study of Tennyson," in *Cornhill*, wonders why the poet does not give Miss Mitford credit for "Dora," so far as plot is considered. In the 1842 edition there is a note to that effect, also crediting Miss Ferrier (Walter Scott's pet young authoress) with the idea of "Lady Clare"; but the rigid suppression of notes carried that one with the rest.

Tennyson has, throughout his career of literary labor, not merely inverted his stilus to rub out a word here and there; but whenever he fancied a verse or a whole poem to be overripe or rotten, he has not hesitated to tear out page after page, and fling whole editions into the fire. But the permanency of print to him is a curse. His older versions have acquired a charm for ghoulish bibliomaniacs; and notwithstanding his suppressive policy, he is impotent in his endeavors, and must sit and suffer pangs while surreptitious and piratic editions of his early poems are being passed about under his very nose.

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The "Lover's Tale" (what motive could have induced him to withdraw it from publication?), written when the poet was nineteen, is a specimen of his fastidious anxiety; some freebooting publisher of late years issued it illicitly, and the Laureate "had him up" for the offense, but was finally obliged to yield to his fate, and issue it himself. The London *Times* intimated that theft of that sort would become popular, if publication of a sought-for poem were thereby enforced.

What an unpretentious winning poem is "The Princess"! Who is there among articulately speaking men that has not been charmed by it? (By articulately speaking men, I mean, of course, English-speaking men.) It is so simple, so easy to understand (one wise critic, however, claims Tennyson's intelligibility to be a defect); and yet it has political, moral, and social philosophy enough in it to furnish up a university or social congress. It appeared in 1847, and showed that Wordsworth had not mistaken the merit of his successor to the laurel crown.

Several models may have been used to obtain the form of "In Memoriam." The one nearest in mechanical construction is the latter

part of Petrarch's "Rime" (after Laura's Death). Adonais had been adopted by Shelley as his model for the poem on the death of Keats; and Tennyson had the Greek lament in his mind, as also Milton's "Lycidas." Ben Jonson and Lord Herbert of Cherbury perhaps furnished the particular versification used.

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But if we compare Tennyson's work with the Italian or English poems suggested, we find it infinitely superior both in matter and manner. There is always a hint of mawkishness when a lover whines bemoaningly over a mistress, whether alive or dead; but a boy's friendship for his fellow is pure and reverential; and in the grandeur of the thoughts strung together, the man of the nineteenth century has by far the advantage in breadth and dignity over him of the fourteenth.

"Lycidas," after all, has something of the air of a college exercise, gotten up "to improve the occasion" of young King's death; and Shelley was thinking entirely too much of his Greek model to be completely natural in his verse or grief.

"In Memoriam" is neither more nor less than a careful treasure-house, wherein are stored the best and most affectionate of a man's thoughts, for delivery on the joyous

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day when a far-travelled friend returns to his home.

In 1850, Wordsworth died, and Tennyson was appointed to the laureateship by Lord John Russell; Palmerston, as great an admirer of Virgil as Mæcenas himself, being of the cabinet.

The "Ode on the Death of Wellington" was the first really important official duty undertaken by Tennyson—if a laureate can be said to have duties. No appointed task is easy for a poet; and a poem for an occasion is likely to be weak and worthless. Duty gets but mediocre service out of its slaves. Yet if ever there was a man who could come to the task of poetic eulogy of the dead soldier, it was Tennyson. Wellington was nothing if not English—a character in which he claimed the poet's fullest reverence; who could sympathize fully with the Waterloo victor's intense Anglicanism, distrust of Napoleonic ideas, and faith in England's pluck and glory. All of the Laureate's metrical skill was accordingly invoked; and he even went back to the court of the Romano-Byzantine emperors for a poetic title grand enough and glorious enough to inscribe upon the sarcophagus of the Great Duke.

What a puzzle was "Maud" to the critics for some time after its publication! How its rambling incoherency was discussed! The Laureate was actually compelled to insert, at places in the subsequent edition, additional verses to serve as bridges over the difficulties. And yet how simple it seems to-day! We have most of us grown up to it.

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The poem is really an English version of the "Sorrows of Werther"—the facts being changed to correspond to English taste and prejudices. Indeed, some of the most exquisite passages might be versifications of the German prose, though it may be that Tennyson did not obtain his matter from that source. There is the same brooding introspection; the same impossible ambition to be something, one knows not what; the same sense of apprehension as to the passion of love. The English solution—"a hope for the world in the coming wars"—is better than the German crisis of snuffing out the candle of life altogether. There is the same disgust for the arrogance of wealth. I wonder how many of us thought of the "oiled and curled Assyrian bull" when the Stalwart leader translated the epithet, the other day, into the Stalwart dialect, and likened his faithful Achates unto "a prize ox, waiting for his blue ribbon."

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I always regarded Thackeray's criticism of Tennyson's "Welcome to Alexandra" as one of the happiest expressions of literary judgment of record. Indeed, one always feels safe and satisfied when Thackeray ascends the bench. None but the novelist could have likened the Laureate to "a giant showing a beacon torch on a 'windy headland.'" [Tennyson, I believe, then lived on the Isle of Wight.] His flaming torch is a pine-tree, to be sure, which nobody can wield but himself. He waves it; and four times in the midnight he shouts mightily, 'Alexandra!' and the pontic pine is whirled into the ocean, and Enceladus goes home." Think of the tall poet as Enceladus waving a flaming pine! Thackeray once said that Tennyson was the wisest man he knew.

The two men were at college together; but it is hardly likely that they were in the same set. The fact is, that Thackeray in those days must have been too wild for the rectory boy poet. We all enjoy the recital of the tricks and manners of the Steynes, the Cinq-bars, the Ringwoods, and the Deuceaces; but, my dear young lady readers, it could hardly be that one should describe them so well without having frequented their society more than was good for a young gentleman with his for-

tune still to make. It is all right now; but what trouble the perverseness of attaining that sort of knowledge must have given, at the time, to those in family or collegiate authority!

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I somehow fancy that we of this generation, who learned our letters before '50 (*Eheu fugaces!*), and were rather tender calves when the rebellion broke out, who had to read the "Idylls of the King" by piecemeal, have been cheated out of the fullest appreciation of the work which would attend a perusal of the entire series as one logical unity. After "Morte d'Arthur," every one believed that Tennyson could write an English epic, if an English epic was to be written at all; and for all practical purposes, the "Idylls" constitute an epic; and if the author did not give them the name, it was probably out of respect for some arbitrary tradition, such as that which requires an epic to be limited in narrative, so far as the poet is concerned, to one year—in other words, to be the record of a single campaign.

It had been understood for years, before the Arthurian legends, constituting four of the "Idylls," were published, that the Laureate was at work upon a long poem; indeed,

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two of the "Idylls" had been privately printed, but were being held in suspense, and subject to emendation. For some time before the actual publication there was a buzz of literary expectancy, which pervaded the United States as well as England; and the eagerness to read the poems invaded classes ordinarily cold to the charms of verse. I can remember my own enthusiasm, in a western town, when the librarian handed me the only copy which had come, and which he had saved for me, and I shut myself up to enjoy the marvellous production before the bloom had vanished from the verse or the odor from the printer's ink.

Tennyson, as befitted an Englishman, took an English demi-god for his hero—that is, a hero conventionally agreed upon by myth dealers as English; for it is by no means certain that Arthur was not Breton rather than Briton in birth and domicile. People, too, who look into such matters closely seem to fancy that *Flos regum Arthurus* is a graft, imported from some Aryan nursery. The material forming the basis of the story was the "Morte d'Arthur" of Malory, helped out by other chroniclers — English, French, Welsh, and Irish—in prose and verse; for the story has oozed into the text of nearly all legends of

the Romantic literature of Europe. The subject was said to be a favorite one with the late Prince Consort, whose taste shows itself in a quiet way in so many directions in English art and culture.

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Among the sources other than Malory to which Tennyson betook himself for his framework of facts was the "Mabinogion," or "Boys' Own Book of Tales," as an English publisher might call it.

There was, half a century ago, down in the "black country" of Wales, a certain man of great financial genius, who "wrought till he crept from a gutted mine, master of half a servile shire," and of every other good thing which wealth can buy; and among these good things, of a noble and brilliant wife, one Lady Charlotte Lindsey. (All women named Lindsey or Lindsay are wonderfully clever; witness, "Auld Robin Gray," etc.) This elegant dame took it into her head to publish an *édition de luxe* of the "Mabinogion," and to have it printed in Wales. Of course, it was the bibliographical wonder of the day. Scholars prized it, learned bishops spoke enthusiastically (and truthfully also) of its merits; while Tennyson, who seems to like the Welsh, appropriated or conveyed from it into his collection of idylls the story of "Geraint ap

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Erbin," a tale that, whether in the original legend or in the poet's verse, more than rivals the "Griseldis" of Boccaccio for interest and simplicity of moral.

Tennyson is said to consider the idyll of "Guinevere" the culmination of the epic. I never felt very deeply the force of that idyll. It has somehow seemed to me that the real painful crisis is when little Dagonet—the poor, faithful clown, the affectionate human dog—looks up to his royal master and says, sobbing,

"I am thy fool,
And I shall never make thee smile again."

As to the "Guinevere" idyll, there would naturally be some sense of cheerfulness about the parties, like two divorced people taking lunch together after the judge has decreed separation *a vinculo*. Arthur's spirits are stirred by the battle in which he is about to engage—a dubious one, it is true; but Arthur is a Celt, and the outlook has its charms. On the other hand, Guinevere has been confessing the wrongs done by her; and next to wronging a friend or lover, what a woman most enjoys is telling him of it. In such a crisis there is falsehood either to her lord or her lover, and falsehood is never lofty or touching. It is moral, however; but morality

is neither epic nor tragic. If prim Madam Morality even escapes being laughable, she is lucky.

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The business of appropriating other men's labors as the foundation for one's own has been a matter of controversy in the forum of literary morality ever since the *Æneid*. Is it a merit or a vice to take up and improve another's thought? A certain class of critics would like to make it a crime; but, on the other hand, success seems to crown every author, whether epic poet or dramatist, who accomplishes such a robbery boldly and artistically. There is probably no great literary monument (not even excepting Homer's epics) that is not a plagiaristic conversion, for which not one, but several generations and ages, might be actionable together.

An instance of this successive appropriation is the story of "Federigo and the Falcon," claimed to be original with Boccaccio. As a fact, it is an Arabic legend, told of Hatem Tai, a sheik and poet of a period prior to Mohammed, whose metrical attacks upon avarice are still on the lips of his countrymen; the legend varying, however, in that it represents the sacrifice to hospitality as being a favorite horse which the Byzantine emperor,

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to make trial of Hatem's renowned generosity, had sent messengers to request as a gift, and which, on their arrival, and before Hatem had learned the object of their coming, he had (being straitened in his larder, and horseflesh being regarded as dainty food) killed and cooked for their entertainment. It was natural that the gallantry of western Europe should have substituted a lady-love for the emperor, and that the gentle sport of falconry should have suggested a pet hawk for the Arab's steed.

In style, Tennyson seems to harmonize, to a remarkable degree, with the languid tenderness of the Italian prosaist. Had Boccaccio been kept in Purgatory five hundred years for his sins of sense, and then as penance let loose in England to write what pleased him, he certainly would have chosen the Laureate's style.

Into what bright and glittering pieces Tennyson has recoined the old Italian bullion! And with what manly decency does he stand out in his vigorous, mental health as compared with La Fontaine's licentious indolence, and in working the same lode!

As a moralist, and in comparison with the French masters in that regard, Tennyson has

much of the delicate faculty of observation of the suppressed emotions and passions of men and women which vivifies the prose of La Bruyère.

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In his subjects and his treatment of them, Tennyson is the very high-priest of "Divinest Melancholy"; and in that particular, whatever be the cause, whether it lies in the imperfect digestion of his generation or in its overwrought nervous powers, he is emphatically the poet of his age, of its thought and emotions. He has only to touch the chords, and humanity mysteriously grieves like a tender-hearted setter under the magic of a nocturne on the piano.

Politically, Tennyson would appear to be an aristocratic liberal; that is, a man who assumes to be above the people rather than of them; who would not the less scorn to add a feather to their weights in running the race of life; but who, at the same time, has an amiable contempt for the servility, treachery, and dishonesty which are more than likely to be qualities inherent in poverty, whether handicapped or not by ignorance or servile origin. And in any event, *ex officio*, every poet should be something of a tory.

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For the same reason, a poet should, for his profession's sake, belong to the more archaic church. The ceilings of the would-be philosophical temple of Protestantism have too white-washed and forbidding a look to invite the muses to kneel therein. But we have no right to expect that a man born in an English rectory should escape the prejudices which are the *lares* haunting its hearthstones. To me, "Queen Mary," whether regarded as a poem or a drama, is a very uncomfortable production. There is an *aura* of chilliness running through the entire subject. There is but one cheery moment or word to rest upon; and that is where "Robin came and kissed me milking the cow."

Wives who suffer as did Mary are by no means uncommon; and in a social point of view, to say the least of it, it was rather ungallant of the Laureate, in his eagerness to strike a blow for his island's church, to hit out at a poor, visionary old maid making a loveless and fruitless marriage. Whenever rubicund and wheezy Anglican ecclesiasticism feels, as punishment for its good living, an extra twinge of rheumatic gout in its joints, it has frightful visions of the Armada and the Spanish Inquisition; and groans about thumb-screws and racks.

"The Cup," as a drama, has, I believe, had more stage success than either "Harold" or "Mary," and has bits here and there in the poet's happiest manner. The incident is taken from Plutarch's "Amatoria" (repeated in Polyænus). I remember seeing it made into a story with a French *mise en scène*, published in "Friendship's Offering" for 1839, an annual to preceding years of which Tennyson had contributed. The subject appears also to have been selected by Jean de Hays, a French dramatist, at the close of the sixteenth century, for his "Cammate."

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As each of Tennyson's plays has been produced on the stage, there has been a buzzing sub-murmur of critics that there was only a *succès d'estime*, if not an absolute failure. Had there been an out-and-out failure, it would only have been what might have been expected. The poet is not versed in stage business, as is Boucicault, and such knowledge is absolutely essential to the composition, nowadays, of a successful drama. Had the rectory lad improved his time properly, from say 1830 to 1840, in lounging in the green-rooms and posing in the side-scenes, jostling scene-shifters and shawling *soubrettes*, and taking thespian parties to supper orgies, instead of sitting priggishly in his darling

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room and posing as "Miss Alfred," his training would now stand him in good service.

But a day may come when the public familiar with the text of his plays will enjoy them on representation. Be it remembered that "The Cid" had detractors whose opinions were weighty; and that Molière's wittiest lines took time to impress.

The telegraph tells us that Tennyson's prose drama, "The Promise of May," is a failure; and also that the Most Noble, the Marquess of Queensberry, arose and protested against the travesty in the play of the modern dogmas concerning free thought, and left the house. One is carried back to the days of Louis Quatorze, and to the noble cavaliers who then crowded the stage, and abused the dramatists of that glittering time. What the deuce has a noble marquess to do with free thought, anyway? A coronet is about as handy a thing to have on in a revolution in politics or religion as a stovepipe hat in an Irish shindy. How much more appreciative a critic would her Grace Kitty of the ducal Queensberrys have been—Prior's Kitty—Gay's Kitty—who stood stoutly up for "The Beggar's Opera," and nursed the sick poet in his disgrace when royalty itself turned censor—Walpole's Kitty—could she

have sat in a box and patted her pretty hands!

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Tennyson's fame has brought him one frightful infliction, in the persistent intrusion upon his time and acquaintance of lion-hunting tourists; and it is even murmured that there is a class of travelling Americans especially guilty in that way.

Hawthorne set Americans an example in that regard which should have been accepted. Now, if there was an American who would have represented our nation gracefully in the poet's eyes, it would have been Hawthorne; if any American could have been sure of a welcome, it was Hawthorne; and yet he contented himself with a good look at the Englishman in a public assembly. There might be a remedy for the evil, pacifying all parties. The poet might select a tall young man from the rising generation—some Maudle or Postlethwaite—who would not cloy with being stared at (and there are young bards to whom notoriety is *so* sweet!), to play the part of the veteran's double, and be shown as the actual incumbent of the laureateship. Of course, the shadow would have to prune his diction so as not to ruin Tennyson's reputation; but

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such discipline might be a great benefit in years to come.

Tennyson has, as a fact, founded no school. His grammatical methods, his fashions of prosody, his shades of mannerism, have all been imitated, for all had the seed; but the revolution in science, over the infancy of which Tennyson has been a watchful sentinel, and the broadening of the field of culture, the new aims which are to be sought, and the new foes which are to be vanquished, render it necessary that "the foremost files of time," in which Tennyson has so long served as a grenadier, be filled up with young recruits armed with new weapons; and that the veterans who survive be left to do simple garrison duty over the spoils already captured.

Tennyson has lived a brilliant and complete literary life. We hope he may be spared to us as long as was Fontenelle to the Frenchmen; that he will see an international copyright in smooth working order; that he will make a fortune out of his books, every stanza bringing him a one-caret diamond; and that he will be peremptorily summoned to the House of Lords before "that venerable bulwark" is smashed to

flinders by the artillery of "Free Thought."
What a pang strikes the hearts of us—

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"With tonsured heads in middle age forlorn"—

when a master of our day passes away!
How many are there of us who have read
a fresh novel with any intensity since Thackeray fell asleep? People of the glaring, impertinent generation coming in and treading on our kibes may have their new fiction, new poems, and new philosophy; but we will none of them.

The generation which commenced "when classic Canning died" is closing; the men who amused and instructed it are, with some few exceptions, gone. Macaulay, Thackeray, Dickens, Longfellow, Dr. Newman, Carlyle, Mrs. Browning, George Eliot, and Anthony Trollope are dead. If a few like Manning, Gladstone, and Tennyson still remain with us, "yet is their strength labor and sorrow."

There is no easy transition or succession from one generation to another. There is always a moral chasm intervening. The coming race may admire Tennyson; but he will not be their representative poet. His prides, his sympathies, his affections, his politics, his beliefs, will be archaisms to their

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taste. There are poets, possessors of some power and authority in our reading world, who may reign after him; but it will be as a new dynasty, and not by regular succession.

It will be a bad index of the morality of the next age if the band of "fleshly" bards who have already glided into popularity maintain their ground permanently. They are as foreign to the Laureate in temperament and morals as were the authors of the days of Charles II. to Milton. The clef to which the Laureate has at all times set his notes has been one of honest morality or honest remorse. He has sung either the miseries that attend as sequences to impossible or disappointed love in self-reverencing natures, or the happiness which honestly comes from gratification; but he has not dallied over description of the actual orgasms of passion. Love is present in all his verses; but it is hidden under the soil, like the dead man's head in the Pot of Basil. It is the force behind the emotion—not the ultimate object to be reached. But with the school I speak of, the delirium is the normal state of the pulse; and poetry would seem to be merely one long gloating chant of tyrannic and slobbering sensuality, that suggests the turgid

visions of an insane retreat, and the propriety of prompt exhibition of a strong dose of bromide to the severed or epileptic versifier.

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What Tennyson thinks of that sort of poetico-sexual Katzenjammer may be gathered from the fact that he makes Lucretius speed his departure out of life when he discovers, or fancies that he discovers, what a degraded phenomenon it is, under given conditions.

I have suggested that Tennyson closes a poetic generation. He has been in sympathy with every great poet, from Dante downward. He is, as it were, the end of the Renaissance. After all, there is only a difference of degree, of intensity of knowledge, between, say Petrarch, Erasmus, Bentley, Dr. Johnson, Porson, and Dr. Arnold. All belong to the same order of thought, used the same materials—that is to say, they rescued the fragments of Greek civilization and letters, and worked them into western culture. Those materials, so far as the workmen are concerned, are exhausted. There is little or nothing of them that is not being manipulated at third or fourth hands. There must be details told off to go out into the forests, like Homer's Achaians, for new fuel. The precious metals of the Greek revival of letters have been

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all melted down and thoroughly mixed. The old plate of Asiatic thought must now go into the pot.

Tennyson felt the need of being in full sympathy with the scholarship of his day, and attained it. But the new poet, the possible worthy successor of Tennyson, must not rest with Virgil and Theocritus, Dante and Shakspeare, as his masters and guides.

He must go back to the cradle of the world, peradventure, to find there, not models, but mysterious metaphysical forces, wherewith to vivify his verse. This new poet, whoever he be, this Iopas to come after the Phemios of Her Majesty Victoria's court, must, in any event, as part of his poetic task, learn to clothe the present aridity of science in graceful garb. He must be a Lucretius to the Memmii of the next race.

How he will work, what elements he will employ, what emotions invoke, we of this age cannot declare, any more than Coleridge could have foretold the success and glory of Tennyson.

CHRONOLOGY

OF LITERATURE AND POLITICS,

PREPARED WITH REFERENCE TO THE BIOGRAPHY
OF ALFRED TENNYSON.

1809. August 5. ALFRED TENNYSON BORN.

In the same year were born William E. Gladstone, Cardinal Manning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1807?), Charles R. Darwin, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Stuart Blackie, Edgar Allan Poe, Lord Houghton (R. Monckton Milnes), Bishop Selwyn.

Within the century, and to be regarded as contemporaries, were born Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800), George Bancroft (1800), Edgar Bouverie Pusey (1800), John Henry Newman (1801), Hugh Miller (1802), Harriet Martineau (1802), Victor Hugo (1802), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803), Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804), John Frederick Denison Maurice (1805), Bulwer - Lytton (1805), Benjamin Disraeli (1805), John Sterling (1806), John Stuart Mill (1806), John Greenleaf Whittier (1807), Richard Chenevix Trench (1807), Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807), Charles Tennyson Turner (1808).

Within the decade succeeding Tennyson's birth were born Henry Alford (1810),

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- Alfred de Musset (1810), Arthur Henry Hallam (February, 1811), William Makepeace Thackeray (1811), Robert Lowe (1811), John Bright (1811), Robert Browning (1812), Charles Dickens (1812), Norman Macleod (1812), Charles Reade (1814), Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1815), Anthony Trollope (1815), Charlotte Brontë (1816), Tom Taylor (1817), James Anthony Froude (*circa* 1818), HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA (1819), PRINCE ALBERT (1819), Charles Kingsley (1819), James Russell Lowell (1819), John Ruskin (1819), Herbert Spencer (1820), John Tyndall (1820), Florence Nightingale (1820).
1821. Death of John Keats (born 1795).
Bishop Temple (Essays and Reviews) born.
1822. Death of Percy Bysshe Shelley (born 1792).
Alfred Tennyson writes a MS. tale.
1824. Death of Lord Byron (born 1788).
1825. Thomas Henry Huxley born.
1827. Death of Ugo Foscolo (born 1775).
"POEMS BY TWO BROTHERS" published May 19. First contemporary criticism of the Poems appeared in the *Literary Chronicle*.
1828. Death of Canning.
Alfred Tennyson writes "The Lover's Tale" (not printed till 1833).
The poet takes up his residence at Cambridge (Trinity College).
THE POEM "TIMBUCTOO" GAINS THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL.
DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI born.
1829. Catholic Relief Bill passed.

1830. "POEMS, CHIEFLY LYRICAL," published. *Alfred Tennyson, Poet Laureate.*
John Stuart Mill writes a favorable criticism on.
1831. Dr. George Clayton Tennyson, the poet's father, dies.
The present Lord Lytton (Owen Meredith) born.
A poem by Tennyson appears in "The Gem."
1832. Reform Bill passed.
January. Arthur Hallam leaves Cambridge.
Wilson (Kit North) publishes a review of Tennyson in Blackwood.
Death of Sir Walter Scott (born 1771).
Tennyson publishes sonnets in "The Yorkshire Literary Annual," and in "Friendship's Offering"; a sonnet published by Edward Tennyson.
- 1832-3. SECOND VOLUME of Alfred Tennyson's poems published by Moxon.
1833. Sept. 15. ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM DIES AT VIENNA.
1834. Death of Coleridge (born 1772).
January 3. Hallam buried at Clevedon Church, Somersetshire.
1837. HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA ASCENDS THE THRONE.
Alfred Tennyson resident at Caistor, Lincolnshire, where an uncle was vicar.
"St. Agnes" published in "The Keepsake."
The lines in Maud, "O that 't were possible," published in "The Tribute."
1840. Marriage of Queen Victoria with Prince Albert.

- Alfred* 1841. BIRTH OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.
Tennyson, 1842. POEMS BY ALFRED TENNYSON IN TWO
Poet VOLUMES published.
Laureate. 1843. DEATH OF ROBERT SOUTHEY, Poet Lau-
 reate (born 1774).
 CHARLES ALGERNON SWINBURNE born.
 Wordsworth meets Tennyson.
 Wordsworth writes eulogistically of Ten-
 nyson to Professor Reed.
1844. Death of John Sterling.
1845. Tennyson receives a pension of £200 from
 Sir Robert Peel, prime minister.
 January 31. Tennyson dines at the poet
 Rogers'.
 DEATH OF THOMAS HOOD (born 1798).
1847. "THE PRINCESS, A MEDLEY," published.
 Sir John Franklin lost in the Arctic (born
 1786).
1849. Death of Lady Blessington (born 1789).
1850. June 13. Tennyson married to Emily,
 daughter of Henry Sellwood, Esq., of
 Horncastle (a niece of Sir John Franklin).
 April 23. DEATH OF WILLIAM WORDS-
 WORTH, Poet Laureate (born 1770).
 "IN MEMORIAM" published. Three edi-
 tions appeared the same year.
 Death of Sir Robert Peel (born 1788).
 Death of Henry Fitzmaurice Hallam.
 Nov. 21. TENNYSON GAZETTED POET
 LAUREATE.
1851. March 6. Tennyson attends the Queen's
 Levee.
 The seventh edition of Tennyson's poems
 appears.
 September. Tennyson in France.

1852. Sept. 14. DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON (born 1769).
 Death of Thomas Moore (born 1779).
 In the course of this year several anti-Gallic or anti-Napoleonic songs appeared, supposed to be by the Laureate. (Two verses addressed to America omitted in the later edition of "Hands all round.")
 Hallam Tennyson born at Twickenham, where the poet then resided.
1854. Death of Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd (born 1795).
 John Wilson (Kit North) dies (born 1785).
 Frederick Tennyson publishes a volume of poems.
 Dec. 9. "The Charge of the Light Brigade" appears in the *London Examiner*.
1855. The Poet Laureate is admitted to the honorary degree of D. C. L. Oxon.
 "MAUD, AND OTHER POEMS," published.
 Death of Mary Russell Mitford (born 1786).
 Death of Samuel Rogers (born 1763).
1856. Death of Hugh Miller.
1857. "Enid" and "Nemuc" privately printed.
 Death of Alfred de Musset.
 Hawthorne sees Tennyson at Manchester.
 Bayard Taylor visits Tennyson at the Isle of Wight.
1859. Death of Leigh Hunt (born 1784).
 DEATH OF THOMAS BABINGTON LORD MACAULAY.
 DEATH OF HENRY HALLAM (born 1777).
 Death of Thomas De Quincey (born 1785).
 DEATH OF WASHINGTON IRVING (born 1783).

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- July. "IDYLLS OF THE KING" published.
1861. DEATH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.
DEATH OF ELIZABETH BARRETT BROW-
ING.
1863. March 18. "Welcome to Alexandra"
published.
DEATH OF THACKERAY.
Death of Richard Whately (born 1787).
1864. Mrs. Alfred Tennyson writes a song, "Alma
River."
"ENOCH ARDEN" published.
Death of Walter Savage Landor (born
1775).
DEATH OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.
1865. Death of Edward Everett (born 1794).
DEATH OF LORD PALMERSTON (born 1784).
Alfred Tennyson offered a baronetcy and
declines it; admitted to the Royal Society.
1866. Septimus Tennyson, a brother of the poet,
dies at Cheltenham.
DEATH OF WILLIAM WHEWELL (born 1795).
1867. Professor Selwyn publishes a Latin version
of "Enoch Arden."
"The Window; or, the Loves of the
Wrens," privately printed by Sir Ivor
Guest.
Set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan.
1868. Alexander Strahan becomes the poet's
publisher.
Death of Henry Hart Milman (born 1791).
Death of Sir David Brewster (born 1781).
"LUCRETIVS" published in *Macmillan's*.
1869. The poet elected an honorary fellow of
Trinity College, Cambridge, removes to
Surrey.

- Death of the Earl of Derby (born 1799).
1870. Death of Charles Dickens.
 "THE HOLY GRAIL, AND OTHER POEMS,"
 published (4 new idylls).
1871. Death of Henry Alford.
 Death of George Grote (born 1794).
 "THE LAST TOURNAMENT" published in
 the *Contemporary Review* for December.
1872. "GARETH AND LYNETTE" published.
 DEATH OF FREDERICK MAURICE.
 Library edition in six volumes of Tenny-
 son's poems.
1873. DEATH OF LORD BULWER-LYTTON (born
 1805).
 Death of John Stuart Mill.
1874. H. S. King & Co. become the poet's pub-
 lishers.
1875. "QUEEN MARY" published.
1877. "HAROLD" published.
1878. DEATH OF EARL RUSSELL (born 1792).
 BIRTH OF ALFRED TENNYSON, the poet's
 grandson.
 "THE REVENGE." A ballad of the Fleet.
1879. DEATH OF CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.
 "THE LOVER'S TALE" republished.
 "The Falcon" performed at "The St.
 James."
1880. "BALLADS, AND OTHER POEMS," pub-
 lished; C. Kegan Paul & Co. become
 the poet's publishers.
 Death of Frank Buckland (born 1826).
 Death of Tom Taylor.
 Death of George Eliot.
 "The Cup" performed at "The Lyceum."
1881. Death of Thomas Carlyle (born 1795).
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- Death of Lord Beaconsfield.
Death of Mrs. S. C. Hall (born 1805).
1882. DEATH OF HENRY WADSWORTH LONG-
FELLOW.
Death of Ralph Waldo Emerson (born
1803).
Death of Charles R. Darwin.
Death of Anthony Trollope.
Death of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.
"The Promise of May" performed at
"The Globe."
1883. Takes a trip with Mr. Gladstone to Copen-
hagen, and is received by the King and
Queen of Denmark, the Czar and Czarina,
the King and Queen of Greece, and the
Princess of Wales.
1884. "BRACKETT, AND OTHER PLAYS."
"THE CUP" and "THE FALCON."
Is offered a peerage by her majesty, and is
gazetted Baron of Aldworth and Farring-
ford January 18.
1885. "TIRESIAS, AND OTHER POEMS."
1886. "LOCKSLEY HALL, SIXTY YEARS AFTER."
1889. "DEMETER, AND OTHER POEMS."
1892. "THE FORESTERS, ROBIN HOOD AND MAID
MARIAN."
Death of George William Curtis.
Death of John Greenleaf Whittier.
Death of Ernest Rénan.
Death of Tennyson, October 6.
"AENONE, AKBAR'S DREAM, AND OTHER
POEMS," published.

DITMARSCH AND KLAUS GROTH.

A PLATTDEUTSCH CHAT.

“Beer is keen Win, Win is keen Beer.”



HERE is a long strip of the German empire (say the northern one third, extending from the Rhine to Russian Poland, and especially comprising the lower Rhine lands, Westphalia, Hanover, what was once lower Saxony, Holstein—and Ditmarsch — Mecklenburg, Pommern, and Brandenburg), to the natives of which the language of Lessing is an acquired tongue. Their vernacular, the speech of the farm and the nursery, is a mass of queer crystallizations of expression, with few grammatical inflections to keep it from being jumbled. It is only when the young North German goes to school, and often not then, that he finds his tongue in the *quasi* Greek harness of conjugation and declension which marks High German—the language of Teutonic civilization—as distinct from Low German or Plattdeutsch.

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English is Plattdeutsch ; Dutch is Plattdeutsch; but inasmuch as both English and Dutch have acquired a sort of autonomy among tongues, the name Plattdeutsch is rather limited to the unwritten, or more correctly, non-literary, language of the North German. To illustrate, in a homely way, the affinities of the two speeches, English and Plattdeutsch, let us suppose that we take a batch of fine-bolted wheaten flour; bake it, with its suitable ingredients, into a pancake; sprinkle it with loaf-sugar; smear it with currant jelly; and may be, scatter over it a little ground cinnamon. The dish will represent the English tongue, starting with the wheaten flour as the old Saxon and Frisian basis; the sugar being the Latin addition; the currant jelly, what we have borrowed from the French and Normand; and the cinnamon, a trifle we have picked up in our piratical sea maraudings from the Orientals. But if you bake your cake from unbolted flour, and eat it with no fancy additions, that would be the Plattdeutsch of Mecklenburg and Ditmarsch—a healthful article, good for the teeth and the complexion, but all full of lumps and rough edges—homely black bread, as it were.

If you have ever hung over a grocery counter in San Francisco, you perhaps have no-

ticed that the grocer talked with his blond apprentice in a tongue that sounded strangely familiar, but unintelligible; and you have, may be, imagined that it might be very corrupt English spoken with a strong Germanic accent. You were mistaken a little—it was German spoken with an English accent; for the accent and pronunciation of Plattdeutsch are more akin to English than are those of any other branch of the Teutonic stem. Low German consonants are not bitten so sharply as they leave the mouth; it has the Anglo-Saxon *th*, which High German has not; and its vowels are not so broad or long as in its more aristocratic sister.

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Put the tips of your fingers and thumb of one hand together. If you call the thumb, with its insertion far down at the wrist, Plattdeutsch, the forefinger would be, let us say, Hollandish; the middle finger, English; the third, old Low German of Charlemagne's time; and the little finger, Middle Low German; while the other hand might be called the High or Upper German division, commencing with Luther's New High German, and ending off say with Ulfila's Gothic of the fourth century, which, however, is by some philologists ranked as the parent stem of both upper and lower German, and by some as a

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purely Low German. And here let me say that *low* German does not, primarily, mean vulgar German; nor does *high* German mean aristocratic. *Hill* German and *plain* German would be better renderings of *hoch* and *platt*.

Low German has been called the Doric German; but the expression—though as regards its rusticity somewhat happy—philologically, is incorrect. If the classes of Greek writers had but interchanged tongues, and if Xenophon and Plato had written Doric, and Theocritus had written Attic, then the literary position of Low German would be that of Attic German, as you might say; for in the matter of interchangeability of certain of the consonants, and the closing of the lips for the vowels, Low German has the Atticism and High German the Doricism on the scale of phonetics.

Scotch has been called the Doric branch of English; as a fact, it is simply purer Saxon, and I might almost say, a closer sib of the Plattdeutsch. It would be practical, I fancy, to take a child born in the Lowlands, and by slow migration translate him to Vienna in such easy stages that he would never be able to designate when or where he left his English and commenced his German, nor where he

dropped Plattdeutsch and entered upon High German.

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There are probably as many different dialects of Low German as there are villages. Uniformity in that regard is as impossible, in fact, as to find vernacular English unchangeable as you go from one district in England to another. It is the result of there being no written standard. Webster's spelling-book has, in America, given us a sort of metallic tuning-fork, by which a certain degree of faulty uniformity has been gained; but when there are no written records, a language is apt to vary with every wind that blows—in short, to be modified according to every special influenza that attacks the human air-passages, and to be the victim of every snuffle or whine that may be in vogue. Plattdeutsch has had no written standard, to give it a tramway, for over two hundred years.

Hence Ditmarsch Plattdeutsch is other, in some regards, than Mecklenburg Plattdeutsch; and the Hanoverian has a different speech from him of Pommern.

Plattdeutsch once, however, was literary; it had chronicles, legends, poems ("Reynard the Fox" was originally Plattdeutsch), and a mediæval written existence. One might class certain grand poems—now growing into

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popularity in a Wagnerian sort of way—as Middle Plattdeutsch; and the Plattdeutsch Genius of Language, looking back to his mediæval school-days, might well say, in a proud way, to his High German brother, as Entspekter Bräsig was wont to boast to his old school friend, Hawermann: “In dem Stil, Korl, war ich Dich doch über.”

But the High German Luther, one day, handed in his exercise in the shape of a translation of the Bible; and it won so much praise from the pedagogues, and the nobility and gentry, that the slow Plattdeutscher flung down his copy-book in disgust, and went back to his farm, and abused his cattle, and made love, and quarrelled, in his humble tongue, and but rarely thereafter cared to see himself down in black and white. So Plattdeutsch ceased to be written from the beginning of the seventeenth century; it then became essentially a vulgar tongue—a peasant's *patois*, almost. But an occasional bookworm looked into its old chronicles, and made glossaries, and discussed it as if it were already a corpse on the philological dissecting-table.

It became the triumph of a modest Ditmarsch school-teacher to show that there was a current of blood yet in the Plattdeutsch language.

KLAUS GROTH was born at Heide (Heath), a market-town of Holstein, or rather of Ditmarsch, April 24, 1819. To appreciate our author, it is as necessary to understand his native place as it is to know the Scottish Border to read Scott, or the Hudson to grow fond of Irving. Ditmarsch is the northwest corner of Germany, between the outlets of the Elbe and Eider. Heide, a borough town in the middle of the northern half, became a very flourishing place in 1450, by reason of its being the capital established by the government of the so-called "Forty-eight," who form the centre of the traditional picture of the grand days of the Ditmarsch in a political aspect.

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It was near Heide—to wit, at Hemmingsted, an adjoining parish—that the battle was fought in A. D. 1500, June 17th, in defense of the freedom of Ditmarsch against King John of Denmark, the Duke of Holstein, and Schlenz, the leader of the mercenaries called "The Guard," in which fight, the boors, under Wolf Isebrand, completely routed the King's forces and slew the Junker Schlenz, who fell at the head of his band. The elements helped the boors, and especially the opening of the dikes or bulkheads, whereby the battle-field was flooded.

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Heide was afterwards—June 13, 1559—destroyed utterly, and the Ditmarschers forced to swear allegiance to their royal neighbor, but sprang quickly into a prosperity which, as the centre of a well-cultivated agricultural community, it retained.

Ditmarsch is divided physically into two very distinctive kinds of land, namely, *Marsch*, and *Geest*—*Marsch* land being the moist, fertile lands watered from the down-pouring brooks and springs, shut in from the ocean by dikes and earthworks, dams and gates, flat, unbroken by anything of large growth, save where on a hillock, here and there, a pair of trees hang shadily over the farmer's home. On the other hand, *Geest* (barren) is sand-dune, difficult of cultivation (like the San Francisco Park), where the huntsman has moderate sport after hares and rabbits, and where few acres now and then pay for cultivation. It is in allusion to this *Marsch* and *Geest* distinction that the possessions of the Duke of Oldenburg were likened to Pharaoh's seven fat and seven lean kine, the *Geest* representing the lean and the *Marsch* the well-fed beasts.

If Alameda County could be cut out of its present place and spread out and smoothed down on the western side of San Francisco,

which should be sunk into the bay, the tract so formed would be something like Ditmarsch. It would want Sherman Island to be planted out in the ocean to represent Büsum and the so-called "Koog" land; and there must needs be frost and snow to add to the effect.

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A country of hedges, of embankments, of canals, of fields cut squarely by rectangular lines of ditch, of farms in like manner divided with broader water-ways, of green fields, fat cows, sturdy oxen, thatched roofs with the stork sentinel upon them, a land of careful farming, of broad-shouldered (*strom* is the word) men, of clean, ruddy, flax-haired women—that is Ditmarsch in its best aspect. It is a *comfortable* place, where the boor (in Ditmarsch, an honorable word, like squire in New England) sits in his quaint old house, hears the lowing of his fat cattle as they are driven to feed at their stalls from the juicy hay, and gossips about the parish interests; while afar off rolls up the roar of the Haff, to remind him how large a world there is beyond his little corner, which may pour in upon him and sink him and his possession as was Büsum of old.

Ditmarsch is in a good sense what one might call communistic. Its legal organization is a legacy from its older days. It consists

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of two provinces, North and South Ditmarsch, which in turn are divided into parishes. The province has for prefect a native Ditmarscher; each parish has for mayor (*Vagt*) a native appointed from three proposed candidates elected by the boor class, which election is for life. Out of these elected deputies the provincial Diet is formed. Of course the deputy (*Vullmach*) is an eminently respectable boor.

The parish mayor, with a clerk (*Schriwer*), is the *ex officio* notary, registrar of wills, etc.; and the mayors with the Landvogt form the provincial court. The code in use is particularly Ditmarschish, a relic of their days of independence. The boor is essentially as much a Tory as any Sir Leicester Dedlock could be. He has the doctrine of primogeniture, and in short every other pet faith of an English country gentleman, in his marrow. He is proud, rather despises the Geest folks, and patronizes the petty farmers and peasants struggling for life in his vicinage. He has many virtues and few vices; and has about as much appreciation of red republicanism and its excited antics as a ruminating ox would have of the feelings of a famished wolf. In old days his ancestors fought well for liberty. It would seem that he has it. His struggle with the ocean has made him

vigilant. With less promise in his undertaking, his corner of land is one of the most fertile and charming in its way in all Germany. He keeps squalor and misery aloof, just as he watches the dike and flood, by always keeping work in hand. So much for Ditmarsch, the birthplace of our poet.

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Groth commenced his education at Tondern, at a seminary. He could not attend a university, either on account of his weak health or want of funds; and accordingly received a modest appointment as teacher of a girls' school at Heide. While so engaged, he pursued his studies, and made distinguished progress in mathematics, natural science, and ancient and modern languages. It was fortunate, perhaps, that he was so cut short in the curriculum of school and university. He had the talents and perceptive powers of a great philologist; but had he followed an academic career, it is possible that, in lieu of the charming lyrics of his native land, he might have given us little beyond the dry bones of philological museums, fit to be cased up in grammars and dictionaries, but not affording the delight which his actual work has produced to his legion of admirers.

In 1847, his head was knocking against

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the ceiling of his girls' school, and he gave up the place, intending to enter a university; but, on account of his health, abandoned the project, and settled at Femarn, where he resided for six years and wrote most of his poems. In 1853, he betook himself to Kiel, to be near the university there.

In 1852, at Hamburg, he published his charming collection of lyrics, and other poems, entitled *Quickborn, Volksleben in plattdeutschen Gedichten ditmarscher Mundart*. Quickborn is the name of a spring in Ditmarsch, which runs both summer and winter, never failing or freezing.

The volume has gone through many editions; its contents are household words from one end of Germany to the other; and it was owing probably to their success and popularity that Fritz Reuter was encouraged to try a similar experiment with the Mecklenburg dialect.

The *Quickborn* now before me (ed. 1873, Berlin) opens with a poem to "My Mother Tongue" (*Min Modersprak*), which for pathos and tenderness recalls some of the sweetest verses of Burns. Indeed, it is evident, all through the book, that while the poet does not seek to copy the Scotch poets, he has studied them very closely; and in

"Hans Schander" he has fairly localized *Ditmarsch*
"Tam O'Shanter and his Mare." "Min *and Klaus*
Annamedder" is a *very* Plattdeutsch "Airy *Groth.*
Fairy Lillian."

Vær de Gærn (For the Children) consists of a number of songs, verses, and prose, two of which I append, with translations, at the same time begging the critical reader not to be too hard upon my versions, as I intended them only as crutches whereby the tyro in German might travel through the original in parallel columns without too much trouble.

"De Krautfru" (The Crab-Woman) is a charming bit of description of a local character, with the load of poverty and basket of crabs on her back, and withal a strong fund of uncomplaining good sense in her heart. It is less refined, but more definite as a picture of character, than Chamisso's "Poor Washerwoman." *Wat sik dat Volk vertellt* is a series of *grugely* (to borrow a German word) stories, to be told by a warm fire, with ghosts shivering outside: "How Old Büsum was Engulfed," "Master John," "Dat gruli Hus" (The Haunted House), and "Hans Iwer, the werewolf." "Ut de ole Krönk" (Out of the Old Chronicle) are ballads as to the struggles of the mediæval Ditmarschers

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for liberty. I append "De Slacht bi Hemmingsted," and "De letzte Feide."

"Wi gingn tosam to Feld" has a faint flavor of "John Anderson, my Jo, John," but nothing like plagiarism, even to the touchiest fault-finder. "Vullmacht sin Tweschens" is a thoroughly lovers' ditty; and shows how deeply the local life and its belongings had worked into the young poet's heart. Indeed, it is the local coloring and freshness that make the poems so captivating. In picking out a number of pieces to serve as examples, I have doubted if I have selected the most appropriate, all having a special charm in severalty.

Groth has published some prose *Vertelln* (Tellings, or Tales) of great originality; but his lyrics and ballads throw them so much in the shade, that it is likely that his earliest and youthful work will ever be the most popular.

The poet has received from the University of Bonn the academic honor of Doctor of Philosophy; and none could more richly deserve such a tribute for his services to his vernacular tongue.

In looking over popular works on language (so as to be sure that I had, in the foregoing, thrust forth no twig of philological

heresy), I came upon an article by the great Oxonian professor, Max Müller, upon the language of Schleswig-Holstein. At first I was frightened lest I had been trifling with a subject which had already been fully discussed by a master and arch-priest in the temple of tongues; but I find that, to the American reader, my chat will be modestly supplemental, at least; and to such as have not already read "Chips from a German Workshop," I recommend the perusal of the article in question (Vol. III.). Some of the selections there from Groth I would have liked to adopt, particularly "Ole Büsum," but I have already usurped more space than was my original intention.

*Ditmarsch
and Klaus
Groth.*

We would encourage all American students of German to look into the Plattdeutsch dialect, even before they have finished struggling with the High German branch. They will find in Groth and Reuter expressions that are old acquaintances; and, in a literary point of view, there is something healthy and hearty in the naturalism of the sketches of the North German's life, like a red-cheeked apple, which has not the mouldy-orange realism of the modern literary mob that believe in the Zola creed.

SELECTIONS FROM "QUICKBORN."

FOR CHILDREN.—STILL, MY JOHNNY!

Still, my Johnny! list to me;
In the straw queaks mousey wee;
On the twig the birdies sleep,
Close their wings, and, dreaming, peep.

Still, my Johnny! cry no more;
Bogy waits outside the door—
The moon is passing through the skies—
"Which child is't here that cries?"

O'er the tree so still and bare,
O'er the house, through Heaven and where
Gentle children meet the eye—
Look! he smiles down jollily.

Then to Bogy doth he say,
"Let's be getting on our way."
So they go and stand together
There above the moor and heather.

Still, my Johnny! sleep away—
He'll be back with dawning day,
Shining down with yellow light
O'er the tree, from Heaven so bright.

The yellow flowers the grass among;
From apple-boughs birds chirp a song.
Still, and close thine eyes to rest—
Hear the mousey in his nest.

SELECTIONS FROM "QUICKBORN."

VOER DE GOERN.—STILL, MIN HANNE!

Still, min Hanne, hör mi to!
Lüttje Müse pipt int Stroh,
Lüttje Vageln slapt in Bom,
Röhrt de Flünk un pipt in Drom.

Still, min Hanne, hör mi an!
Buten geit de böse Mann,
Baben geit de stille Maan:
"Kind, wull hett dat Schrigen dan?"

Aewern Bom so still un blank,
Aewert Hus an Heben lank,
Un wo he frame Kinner süht,
Kik mal an, wa lacht he blid!"

Denn seggt he to de böse Mann,
Se wüllt en beten wider gan,
Denn gat se beid, denn stat se beid
Aewert Moor un aewer de Heid.

Still, min Hanne, slap mal rar!
Morgen is he wedder dar!
Rein so gel, rein so blank,
Aewern Bom an Himmel lank.

All int Gras de gelen Blom!
Vageln pipt in Appeldom,
Still un mak de Ogen to,
Lüttje Müse pipt int Stroh.

*Ditmarsch
and Klaus
Groth.*

THERE DWELT A MAN.

There dwelt a man in meadows green,
Who hadn't a cup or platter e'en.
To passing brook for drink he stooped,
And cherries plucked that o'er him drooped.

A jolly man! A jolly man!
He'd never a pot; he'd never a pan.
He ate the apples off the tree,
And slept in clover cosily.

The sun for him was time-piece good;
His bird-house was the shady wood;
They sang to him nights, above his head,
And waked him up with the dawning red.

This man (oh, what a silly man!)
To be o'ernice at last began.
To be too fussy, he began—
We've lived in houses e'er since then—
Come! Let's off to the green again!

THE FIGHT AT HEMMINGSTED.

(FEBRUARY 17, 1500.)

"There lay his steed, there lay his sword,
And with them, kingly crown."

—*Ditmarsch Folksong.*

The King unto the Duke did say: "O brother of
my heart,

How can we make this free Ditmarsch of our
brave realm a part?"

Reinhold of Milan heard the speech (of tawny
beard was he);

And answered straight: "Unto the Guard, for aid,
send presently."

DAR WAHN EN MANN.

*Ditmarsch
and Klaus
Groth.*

Dar wahn en Mann int gröne Gras
De harr keen Schüttel, harr keen Tass,
De drunk dat Water, wo he't funn,
De plück de Kirschen, wo se stunn'.

Wat weert en Mann! wat weert en Mann!
De harr ni Putt, de harr ni Pann,
De eet de Appeln vun den Bom,
De harr en Bett vun luter Blom.

De Sünn dat weer sin Taschenuhr,
Dat Holt dat weer sin Vagelbur,
De sungn em Abends aewern Kopp,
De wecken em des Morgens op.

De Mann dat weer en narrschen Mann,
De Mann de fung dat Gruweln an.
De Mann de fung dat Gruweln an:
Nu maet wi All in Hüser wahn'.—
Kumm mit, wi wüllt int Gröne gan!

DE SLACHT BI HEMMINGSTED.

(1500, Febr. 17.)

Dar lag do sin Perd, dar lag sin Swert,
Darto de königlike Krone.

—*Ditmarscher Volkslied.*

De König to den Herzog srok: Och hartlev
Broder min,

Wa krigt wi dat frie Ditmarscher Land? segg an,
wa kamt wi in?

As dat Reinold vun Mailand hör, de mit sin
gelen Bart,

Do seggt he, wi schickt de Garr en Bad, dat uns
en Bistand ward.

Ditmarsch When to the Guard the message came, they mus-
and Klaus tered many a sword;
Groth. They gathered fifteen thousand men, and o'er the

Heath they poured.

And when the Guard were with the King, "My
liege" ('twas said in mirth),

"Where lieth then this Ditmarsch land? In
Heaven or on earth?"

"If 'tis not bound with chains to Heaven, and if
on earth it lies"—

So, vaunting, spake the Junker Schlenz—"We'll
make it soon our prize."

He bade the drummers roll their drums—his stan-
dards gayly fly,

And so, o'er road and bridge, they came, till they
our land espy.

"Now ware thee, boor—the Guard—it comes";
from Meldorf was their course;

The helms and hauberks shone like gold—like
silver gleamed the horse.

King John and his proud lords advance, in all the
pomp of power,

While 'neath a wall at Braken, Wolf and his poor
landsmen cower.

The Meldorf road, in black'ning line, full thirty
thousand tread—

From Wörden came a slender troop—a maiden at
their head.

"Help us, O God, who dost all things in Heaven
and earth dispose"—

Wolf Isebrand dashes from his fort—two hundred
followed close.

Sobald de Garr dat Wort man hör, rüst' se sik *Ditmarsch*
mächti sehr, *and Klaus*
Se rüst' wul föfteindusent Mann, un trock daer de *Groth.*
Heiloh her.

Un as de Garr bi den König keem: "Och Herr,
min lewe Herr,
Wo liggt denn nu dat Ditmarscher Land, in
Heben oder op de Eer?"

"Das nich mit Keden ann Himmel bunn', op Eern
is dat to finn'."

Do sä de Junker Slenz mit Stolt: denn wüllt wi't
bald gewinn'!

He leet de Trummelsläger slan, de Fahnn de leet
he fleegn,
Se trocken ut aewer Weg un Steg bet se dat
Ländken seegn.—

"Nu wahr di Bur, de Garr de kumt," vun Möldorp
jagt se her,
De Helm un Panzers schint as Gold, as Sülwer
schint de Per.

König Hans un all wat Adel kumt mit groten Larm
un Schall,
De Wulf de lurt mit wücke Burn bi Braken achtern
Wall.

Vun Möldorp trock dat swart hendal, wul dörtig
dusent Mann:
Vun Wörden il en lütten Tropp, en Mäden gung
vaeran.

"So hölp uns, Herr, du hest dat Rik in Himmel
un op Eer!"

Wulf Isebrand störrt ut de Schanz, twee Hunnert
achterher.

*Ditmarsch
and Klaus
Groth.*

And on the chain-coats rained the blows, and
knights rolled in the sand;

And from the Geest the landsmen came; and the
flood poured o'er the land;

And down from Heaven came the snow; on horse
and man fell blows—

Dim grows the Moor; the Geest is white; but red
the passage grows.

The landsmen cry: "The horses slay; but riders
let us spare";

And barefoot with their bills they sprang; and
their foes fell everywhere;

Till to the trenches driven down, all in the mire
they crawled;

Along the dike, both man and beast in hopeless
struggle sprawled.

"Now ware thee, Guard—the boor—he comes";
he comes with Lord our God;

From Heaven above, the snow descends; from
under, mounts the flood.

And distant hamlets send their aid; and fainter
hearts grow bold—

"Now spare the horse, we'll ride them yet, but
strike the riders cold."

The mud wrapt many a knightly form once swathed
in silken fold;

At swine-moor now rests many a one whose cra-
dle was of gold.

No name so great in Holstein all, or Danish
marches proud—

There sleep they without cross or stone; there lie
they without shroud.

Un op de Panzers fulln de Släg', un Rütters in den *Ditmarsch*
 Sand, *and Klaus*
 Un vun de Geest dar keemn de Burn, un de Floth *Groth.*
 keem aewert Land.
 Un dal vun Heben full de Snee, op Per un Minsch
 de Släg',
 Blank war dat Moor un witt de Geest, un blödi
 warn de Steg'.
 De Buern schregen: stekt de Per un schont de
 Rüterknechts!
 Un sprungn barfot mit Kluwerstöck un slogen
 links un rechts.
 Un reten inne Gröben dal un störtten se in
 Slamm,
 Bet Minsch un Veh sik drängn un drungn all
 langs den smallen Damm.
 "Nu wahr di Garr, de Bur de kumt!" he kumt
 mit Gott den Herrn,
 Vun Heben fällt de Snee heraf, de Floth de stiggt
 vun nerrn.
 Un wit ut alle Dörpen her kumt Hölp un frischen
 Moth:
 "Nu schont de Per—de ridt wi noch—un slat de
 Rütters dot!"
 In Slick un Slamm sack menni Herr, de sunst op
 Siden leeg,
 Int Swinmoor liggt nu menni Een, de harr en
 golden Weeg.
 Keen Nam so grot int Holstenland un nich in
 Dännemark,
 Dar ligt se nu ahn Krüz un Steen, dar ligt se ahn
 en Sark.

Ditmarsch The Guard went down with Junker Schlenz—that
and Klaus man so fierce to dare;
Groth. The saddler tall from Wimersted, he came and
slew him there.
In direful need King John escaped the field—a
woeful man;
At Meldorf left he beer and wine, and roast-joint
in the pan.
A feast prepared! Through need and death, we,
Freedom's heirs, came out,
By Isebrand's aid, "the devil's own," and the
"Thousand-de'ils-redoubt."

THE FINAL OATH OF VASSALAGE.

(JUNE 20, 1559.)

Not a spoken word—not a voice or sound—
Like sheep in the meadow stood they;
They stood like a riven forest there
Where Heide in ruins lay.
For, far and near, the best in the land
Were crushed like the reedy brake;
And the remnant waited on bended knee
Their oath to a lord to take.
And many a heart in its breast beat high;
Through the veins the blood coursed hot;
But their eyes looked over the land through tears,
And the dry lips murmured not.
For those who were foremost in peace and war—
Their chieftains wise and bold—
Those now on the field at Heide slept,
In the mire and ashes cold.

De Garr de full mit Junker Slenz, so grot un stolt *Ditmarsch*
he weer, *and Klaus*
De lange Reimer Wimersted, de keem un steek *Groth.*
em daer.

Mit nauer Noth, in Angst un Sorg keem König
Hans dervan;
In Möldorp leet he Beer un Win un Bradens inne
Pann.

Dat gev en Fest! na Noth un Dod, un Friheit
weer dat Arf.
Dat mak de Düwels Isebrand un de Dusentdüwels-
warf!

DE LETZTE FEIDE.

(1559, Juni 20.)

Nich en Wort war hört, nich en Stimm, nich en Lut,
Se stunn' as de Schap oppe Weid,
Se stunn' as de Rest vun en dalslan Holt,
To Föten de Trümmer vun Heid.

So wit man seeg, de Besten ut Land,
Dar weern se fulln as dat Reeth :
Nu stunn noch de Rest un sack oppe Knee—
Se swert nu en Herrn den Eed.

Dar klopp wul menni Hart inne Bost,
Un dat Blot dat krop un steeg,
Doch de Ogen gungn mit Thran aewert Land,
Un de Mund weer stumm un sweeg.

Denn wit umher de Besten ut Land
In Freden un Strit vaerut,
De legen nu dot oppet Feld vun Heid
Un stumm ünner Asch un Schutt.

Ditmarsch Not a sound was heard save the Haff's wild roar,
and Klaus As the priest their troth records,
Groth. While the people of Ditmarsch were prostrate there,
And the Eight-and-forty Lords.

Blue was the sky, and their tend'rest green
The woods and the meadows wore;
But the Ditmarschers watered the sod with tears
For the freedom they saw no more.

THE DEPUTY'S TWIN DAUGHTERS.

There's a laugh from the garden there hid by
quick-set—

'Tis the deputy's twins—one blonde, one brunette.

The mayor and clerk just now sauntered along,
Like beer-tun with crane that o'er it is swung;

How the brown beauty laughs, as she tosses her
hair,

"You'll be Madam Crookback, mind that, in a
year!"

And the blonde claps her hands as she, laugh-
ing, replies :

"And you'll have old Dumpy as your wedded
prize!"

I thought, as I peeped through the hedge at the
pair,

Which most I would like to be—clerk or the
mayor.

Nich en Lut war hört as dat Haf un de Floth,
Un de Prester leet se swern,
Oppe Knee dar leeg dat Ditmarscher Volk
Un de Acht un veertig Herrn.

*Ditmarsch
and Klaus
Groth.*

Noch schint de Heben der blau hendal
Un grön dat Holt un de Eer:
De Ditmarschen fällt de Thran int Gras,
Un de Friheit seht se ni mehr!

VULLMACHT SIN TWESCHENS.

Wat gluddert in Blomhof un lacht achtern Tun?
De Vullmacht sin Tweschens, de Witt un de Brun.

De Vagt un de Schriwer gungn eben verbi,
Weer jüs as en Beertünn mit Haenken derbi.

Wa lach do de Brune un schüttel de Haar:
Du kriggst mul de Krumme, schast sehn, noch
vuntjahr!

Wa lach doch de Witte un klapp inne Hann':
Du kriggst mal de Dicke, de Dicke ton Mann!—

Ik kik daer de Paten un heff mi bedacht:
Wat much ik denn, Schriwer wen—oder de Vagt?

FRITZ REUTER'S LIFE AND WORKS.

"Qui vir, et dialectum patriam et sensus animi patrios callet; quem eundem Gratiae ipsae Musis conjunctae jocis miscere seria docuerunt; cujus scriptoris quum alia opera tum etiam librum aureolum huncce OLLE CAMELLEN, Germania laudat universa."



FRIENDLY Kiel critic of my first article (upon Groth, Ditmarsch, and Plattdeutsch) seems to think that there is a thread of half-apology running through it in behalf of the Low German, and ascribes it, in a charitable spirit, to my wish to overcome the supercilious "pride of the English race" toward a kindred but humbler tongue—a poor cousin, as it were. It may be that there was such a tinge unconsciously given to the essay; but if any prejudice exists in the American mind as to Low German (a premise I do not wish to concede), it has assuredly sprung from exotic seeds planted there by fastidious High Germans. There is a class of Germans who, in discussing Plattdeutsch with Americans,

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leave an incorrect impression as to the social *status* of the less cultivated tongue, not so much in the facts they offer as in the impression left to be derived from those facts. There is still another class, who (not being quite at ease as to their own educational ground) fancy that any suspicion of the *platt* in their language would be a social blot—a proof of vulgarity. Of this order was that lady introduced in a modern German novel, who assumed to be an oracle in culture by reason of being the daughter of a professor, and who reproved her docile husband for saying *hippodrom*, instead of *hippotraum*, “because *drom* was so *platt*!” No language or dialect is in itself mean; nor can any dialect beget vulgarity; on the other hand, vulgarity degrades any language it employs, no matter how noble it may have been in origin. Tuscan has, ever since Dante and Boccaccio, been the cultivated language of Italy; but for all that, the proud Venetian retained his own soft dialect. It accompanied him everywhere; even in his courts, where the pleadings were entered in Tuscan, the arguments of the advocates were in Venetian; and it proved the chief feature of as bright a period of the drama as Italy ever saw, when Goldoni wrote down his

plays in his native idiom. Under such circumstances, no speech, or phase of speech, could be anything but dignified. Broad Scotch has never been relegated to an inferior social position. It has been the garb of lyric and elegiac poetry; it has been the solvent for wit in the drawing-room; it has intensified the humorous sally of the advocate; and has furnished its harmony to the lecture-room of the professor. So much for the dignity of dialect, provided, of course, we take dialect in its scientific and good sense, and do not confound it with disintegrating language. A bronze medal may not be of greater intrinsic bullion value than a debased coin; but, in that it is genuine, it is meritorious, which the greasy coin is not. Chinook is a tatter fit only for the worst days of Babel; Pigeon-English is disgusting—Confucius himself would be contemptible if he attempted to converse in it. If ever a Chinese admiral blockades our harbor, and dictates a surrender in Pigeon-English, (and who can say what is in store for us?) he would probably be listened to with inextinguishable laughter.

Slang is distorted metaphor and corrupt speech at the same time, both of which vices, like a pair of bow legs, give it a harlequin,

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pigeon-toed air. Bret Harte's "Heathen Chinees" is simply a well-arranged chain of slang; and he ought to have been ashamed to offer it in pawn for fame, when he had far better stuff in his scrip at the time. James Russell Lowell's "Biglow Papers" may be considered partly in the light of dialect, partly as an attempt to represent a peculiar local pronunciation, and partly as the angular wit of one class of American society—not precisely slang, and yet which looks at times very like the boldest order of slang. Artemus Ward wrote the *patois* of the billiard-room and country hotel—an *argot* that would, and did, enable him to discuss the broadest questions of philosophy, politics, and art with the average crowd for which one has the bar-keeper "set up the drinks."

But I must return to my subject, having announced that my platform (a vile Americanism, *mein kieler Freund*) contains a plank for the due support of the social and literary dignity of all twigs of the great Teutonic or Gothic branch of articulate speech, whether written or unwritten. And, in one respect at least, I would suggest an advantage which the German has over the English limb of the Teutonic tree: when High German wears

out in spots, as all languages are fated to do by constant use, the High German has a choice lot of archaic material at hand, in the shape of Plattdeutsch, with which he can mend his tongue—expressions, phrases, constructions known to the elder Cethegi of the race, which can be used without violence to taste. But when our English tongue rusts out, we have nothing wherewith to patch it, except chunks of slang, or euphuistic soft-solder imported from Gaul. It is interesting to notice the dainty efforts of the Laureate, now and then, to substitute an ancient word in lieu of a trite modern phrase, like old tiles set in a new chimney-piece; but it is evidence that the language is disintegrating.

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In the former article I undertook to treat of thought worked into a quaint and novel language, under peaceful auspices, in "a land where all things always seemed the same," and where the poet would appear to have drawn the georgic tranquillity into his blood, and to have reinfused it into his verse and prose—a sort of Teutonic Theocritus, in fact.

Now, I must speak of a widely different character, laboring, if not in the same field,

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at least just over the hedge, and obtaining a different success, although reaching it by the same paths.

Groth's *Quickborn* is a felicitous chain of lyrics; and the work may fairly be placed as the first serious employment of the dialect in which it was composed for two centuries, if we leave out of consideration the dilettant efforts of Voss and a few others, who, in times past, for amusement, noted the possible capacity of the common tongue for literary effort.

Groth has written prose tales; but these efforts, so far as concerns the matter of them, might as well have been idylls; for verse would have suited eminently their pastoral character.

On the other hand, Fritz Reuter first appeared as a writer of verse. But though his *Läuschen un Rimels* won great success, and brought him a degree of provincial fame, I consider that collection as no evidence of brilliancy that would give promise of his future work. It was, as he says, an "assembly of street urchins," amusing from their dirty faces and mirthful ways, but with nothing to indicate what they would be when grown to manhood. They were like tavern signs, on which a great painter may have

labored before his genius had been hailed by the world of culture.

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And although Fritz Reuter wrote poems, and long ones too, it is as the prose sketch-writer that he is to be deemed most successful. This is not to disparage his poetic talent, which blossoms out of everything he said or wrote. It is simply an attempt to establish an approximative standpoint from which to consider him in discussion. If Burns were to be taken as a Scotch type of Groth, the Ettrick Shepherd might bear some resemblance to Reuter.

FRITZ REUTER was born in Stavenhagen, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, November 7, 1810. In the Rathhaus, where Fritz first saw light, the enthusiastic burghers, in 1873, placed a commemorative tablet to his honor, having, in 1865, already planted a "Reuter Oak."

The town is in the midst of a flat country, here and there a bit of rising ground called ostentatiously a mountain, with little lakes as resting-places for the sluggish streams. The inhabitants, both gentle and simple, have their interests mainly centred in the crops, wheat being the staple—a land of slow-moving, reflective, perhaps a little sly, peasantry; men loath to grasp at new ideas, with

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a ponderously careful tread, as if progress were being made over wide furrows, with constant danger to the grain below.

Stavenhagen (*plattl.* Stenmagen) was ruled in those days, and for generations thereafter (1805-45), by Fritz's father, as *Burgermeister* (a sort of mayor, with certain criminal and other conciliatory jurisdiction). Fritz's mother was one of those typical, patient invalids, full of kindness and cultivation—a queen *fainéante* in her household, carrying for sceptre her knitting-needles, regarded by all, high and low, with affection and chivalrous courtesy, elicited by her helplessness and bodily suffering. It was probably to her nature that Fritz owed his literary leanings, his powers of humorous observation, and his tact and gentle charity in expression. It certainly was not from his father that he drew any of these gifts. His father was a shrewd, common-sense official, full of plans which he carried out with success, bound up in his daily life and duties, and conscientious in performance—a man of stalwart power and passions, filling his part in life amply and creditably.

Fritz has, in *Ut de Franzosentid*, given us a vivid picture of life at Stavenhagen in his infancy. With a masterly hand, he has

drawn for us an outline of the Amtshauptmann (Prefect of District) Weber, a grand old figure, something of a tyrant in his way, looked up to by both burgher and peasant, and of his wife a worthy counterpart. Then there is an "Uncle Herse," who, however, was no uncle at all, but who had that make-up of character and habits which brings the child inevitably to claim some irresponsible relationship with him—a man who was clever, who knew what the birds said, and could answer them—a treasure to any community of children anywhere. Then there was Fritz's mother's sister, "Tante Christiane"; there was Mademoiselle Westphalen; there was the "Watchmaker Droz," a *real* Frenchman (*aus Neufchâtel*), employed to teach Fritz a proper accent.

Fritz did not, for his first years, attend the public school, but took his lessons with his sister Lisette, and his two cousins, Ernst and August. Finally he went to a girls' school—"an owl among the crows." Uncle Herse taught him arithmetic and drawing; the town apothecary, Latin and history; his father, geography; and so his training went on, in a straggling way, until a theological student appeared in the house as a regular pedagogue. When Fritz was fifteen, he lost

his mother by death, and at about the same time was placed at school in the little town of Friedland, Mecklenburg-Strelitz. Of his life there (it lasted three years), there is a quaint picture drawn in *Dörchläuchting*.

At this time Fritz had thoughts of becoming a painter; his more prosaic father preferred the law. Neither was right; but Fritz gave to art a better chance than to jurisprudence. He was sent to the gymnasium at Parchim. In 1831, he went to the University at Rostock, "the up-and-down jump for every true Mecklenburger," as he terms it. In half a year he left Rostock for Jena, and became an altogether too gay member of the Burschenschaft there. It was here that he committed the offence which led to his subsequent conviction of an attempt at high treason, sentence to death, followed by commutation to imprisonment for life, then softened to thirty years, and finally remitted, after he had served seven years of misery, and had lost the flower of his days in aimless trifling within prison-walls.

It was the misfortune of the young man that in those days the German governments comprehended so little the radical leaven which must, at a certain age, work into a ferment in the veins of most educated youth.

Had Fritz played the same class of political pranks at an English university, perhaps the college dons would have looked after him with some degree of nervousness, and would have given him an admonition now and then; but to have ranked him as a criminal would have been, in their eyes, downright absurdity. In an American college, such talk or conduct might have brought a jocular criticism from the rhetorical professor, who, with his gibes, would have patronized the sophomore reformer into conservatism. Dilettant radicalism has long been regarded by English and American professors as an amiable drone-bee in the youthful bonnet, that must finish up a certain amount of buzzing before it assumes a duly conservative torpidity, or is kicked out of the hive altogether by ideas of a honey-gathering class.

The Germanic authorities in those days had, however, the blood of Kotzebue in their eyes, and they fancied every top-booted, velvet-coated, be-ribboned student to be a possible Karl Sand. They make cabinet ministers out of such stuff nowadays. Witness Baron Haymerle.

The prominent facts of Fritz's trouble are these: There was found to be a student conspiracy ramifying all the universities. Some

silly fellows did actually commit an overt riot and sedition at Frankfurt. Fritz was captured in Berlin (he had left Jena, and had gone thither to study law), was tried, and commenced his seven years' life in the different military prisons (*Festungen*) to which he was relegated, finally winding up, as an act of grace, at Dömitz, under his own Grand Duke; and at last, being freed altogether, on the death of the King of Prussia—a broken young man, with a passion for strong drink (*Trunksucht*), that never again entirely forsook him, but was the vampire of his life and powers.

In 1840, at the instance of his father, he went to Heidelberg to study jurisprudence; but, owing to his unhappy tendency to alcoholism, he was recalled, and started afresh on a new career as a farmer. Herein he might have succeeded but for his disease. At this time he met his future wife, Luise Kuntze. In 1844 he completed his education as a farmer; but his *Stromtid* was still a failure, for the old reason; and in 1845 his father died, having finally despaired of his son's reform, and making in his will a guarded testamentary trust, by the terms of which Fritz was not to touch his share of the succession until he had shown signs of free-

dom from the drink trouble for a term of years. Fritz never abstained for the period, and was never let into the possession of the fund.

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He had one good friend, however, who held him patiently up during this period of his life, one Fritz Peters, to whose sympathy and care he probably owed his life, and to whom the public possibly owe his works. At this time he commenced to write—trifles, maybe, but it was a training for success.

In those days broke out the 1848 excitement. Of course the old Freiheit must began to effervesce in the veins of Reuter, and he attempted what we Americans would call "going into politics." He was a deputy at the Town's Diet at Güstrow, and then a delegate to the Assembly for both Mecklenburgs; but the movement never came to anything, and indeed, that sort of business was not in Reuter's vein, as an incident would seem to show. He was acting as president of a Reform League established at Stavenhagen. Of course the members had an agricultural slowness of comprehension. This was too much for the patience of so nervous a politician as Fritz, and amid the regrets of the assembly, he laid down the gavel. He was pressed to give his reasons for declining the office. The

good-natured burghers desired, if possible, to conform to his views, and retain him. But Fritz made for the door, and reaching it, shouted, "You wish to know why I leave?" There was a general stillness of expectation. "Ji sid mi all tau dumm, ji Schapsköpp" (you are all too stupid for me, you sheep-heads), and vanished. Such a man was not stuff for a popular orator; at least, he would make small headway here in a Sand-lot demonstration.

At this time he started in vocation as a private teacher. Still the old trouble. His bride then married him, in hopes to reform him, and in 1851 they commenced life together at Treptow. The wife seems to have been a real helpmate and sympathizer. She never was able to say that she had driven off the arch-enemy, but her presence probably kept the demon at bay most of the time.

Now it was that the poor fellow commenced his work as an author; and to do so in the projected manner, it became almost necessary for him to relearn his Plattdeutsch. The trifles he had hitherto produced, of a doubtful merit and merely local interest, were in High German. Klaus Groth's *Quickborn* had but just appeared, and it struck the needy pedagogue that something of a similar character

in the Mecklenburg dialect would be popular, at least within the boundaries of the duchies. In that country there is a great degree of popularity given to what we might call "yarns," for the want of a better word (*Geschichte*). Fritz had been in the habit of versifying these, and having collected a quantity, launched out with great rashness in business, as both publisher and author. These first endeavors he styled *Läuschen un Rimels*—"a mob of little street urchins, who, in ruddy health, tumble over one another, unrestrained as to æsthetic poses—jolly faces, laughing out from under tow locks, and finding, at times, their fun in the world's folly." The success of this venture was wonderful. The edition, consisting of twelve hundred copies, was sold off briskly; and though his reputation did not yet pass beyond his native Plattdeutsch land, yet his success as an author was established. This work has a quaint dedication to his old, well-tried friend, Fritz Peters.

De Reis' nah Bellingen followed—a story, in verse, of the adventures of Vadder Witt and Vadder Swart, two respectable peasants, who with their sons, Corl and Fritz, project and partially make a journey to Belgium, for purposes of culture and travelled experi-

ence. The excursion is one of ludicrous misfortune, winding up in the police station in Berlin, whence the party return home, to be tongue-castigated by their less adventurous and more conservative wives. There is the thread of a love story, with Fritz and the sexton's daughter for hero and heroine, which terminates happily on the arrival home of the travelled party.

At about this time (1855) our author began the publication of a weekly journal, *Unterhaltungsblatt für beide Mecklenburg und Pommern*. It was in this that he first introduced to his readers his most distinct and remarkable character, the jovial "*immeritirter Entspekter Bräsig*," who wrote characteristic letters to the journal about matters and things of interest to himself and the public. To any admirer of Dickens, who has not also read Reuter, it would be a pleasure worth a whole philological journey through High German, Low German, and Messingsch, to shake hands with the Inspector. It is impossible to give in any language but his the cream of his utterances. His style is his own. However, the character was, at this period, only outlined, and it was not until some time later that Bräsig became an active mover in Reuter's

fiction. On the German stage he became, eventually, a leading character—as marked, as definite, as our American “Joshua Whitcomb.”

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The journal lived but a year. The publisher left his affairs in disorder, and decamped for America. Fritz at this time took up his residence in New Brandenburg.

His next production was a tragic sort of idyll, *Kein Hüsing* (No Housing—*Anglice*, no right of settlement in the parish). It was, in his own estimation, his chief work. A young peasant, desirous of marrying the girl whom he loves, is thwarted in procuring the legal solemnization of the marriage, for the reason that he is unable to furnish the necessary evidence that they will not become a charge on the public; it being necessary, under the local laws, that the pair should have a legal abode, and he employment. He is prevented from this by the machinations of the young Squire, who has cast covetous eyes on the poor girl. The impatient desires of the peasant lovers getting the better of their prudence, the time approaches when their indiscretion becomes known. The young aristocrat and the peasant have a dispute; the peasant strikes the gentleman dead, and disappears as an outlaw; the young mother

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becomes an outcast, and goes crazy, and her infant boy, at her death, falls to the protection of the old servant, once the friend of the father. The father returns from America, and hears the story of his bride's death, and takes the child with him to his new home. The moral of the tale is the working of a *quasi* system of villeinage, which takes from the serf his freedom while he is practically at least *adscriptus glebæ*. While it is a *possible*, yet it can hardly be a *typical*, state of affairs, even in Mecklenburg.

Ut de Franzosentid next followed. This is in prose; and for freshness and delicacy of character-drawing there can be nothing superior in sketch-writing. Each person stands out as plain as if morally photographed, and there is variety enough, there are people enough and material enough, to furnish up a three-volume novel.

There are no finer gentlemen in all Thackeray than Amtshauptmann Weber and Colonel von Toll. Uncle Herse would add a charm to Pickwick, if he only could be posthumously inserted, as binders sometimes insert a rare plate in a work for which it was not originally meant.

Mademoiselle Westphalen is as sweet a woman as ever was; and the peasant char-

acters, headed by the miller, the rear brought up by the "Uhrmacher Droz," in his French regimentals, are wonderful in their way. The miller's daughter is a gem. In short, Fritz has cast a halo about the picture of his childhood; and in the centre of it he has placed his sick mother, knitting away, and receiving the chivalrous homage of the old Amtshauptmann.

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Hanne Nüte (short for Master Johann Snut), or *de lütte Pudel*, is "'ne Vagel un Minschengeschicht," or tale of men and birds, which, if properly read to children, with becoming attention to dramatic recitation and onomatopy, in giving the human dialogue and the bird business, would prove a genuine delight to any healthy crowd of young persons we know—provided, of course, they knew the tongue.

The "Little Poodle" (so called on account of her curly head) is a good little child of a poverty-stricken family, the station in life of which puts her socially beneath Hanne, the son of the village smith. She is out with the children, tending the geese, when the old gray gander takes it into his head to bite the baker, a well-to-do but bad man. The surly baker, indignant at the laughter excited, visits his wrath upon the innocent Little Poodle,

when Hanne appears as her defender, and intervenes with a blow to the discomfited baker. Hanne "gets it," on his return home, for his heroism. The course of true love is broken by the disparity of social *status*, and by Hanne's departure on his Wandering Year as apprentice.

He takes leave of his friends, and among them, of the old rector, with whom he has a glass of wine, and who breaks into a spasm of enthusiasm over his own student life at Jena, to the great terror of his wife, who fears he may have taken a drop too much.

Hanne sets out. The birds convene; the duties are assigned as may best befit the different feathered families; and under the leadership of the solemn Adebör (stork), a general campaign of observation is entered upon for the protection of the Little Poodle's love interests. Hanne is exposed to various trials. Among his experiences, he is employed by a buxom young widow, who tempts him to stop and take up the abandoned sledge of her good man. She attacks him, after the manner of her sex, with good eatables; she pours out for him the most enticing cups of chocolate; she potters about him as he drinks it.

“ Un leggt vör idel Trurigkei
Sick sacht in Hannern sinen Arm
Un de oll Jung’ ; de tröst’t un ei’t
Un dorbi ward em gor tau warm—
’T is möglich von de Schockelor.”

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(And leans, her sorrow moving her,
So gently back on Hanne’s arm :
And he—he plays the comforter,
And grows, unwitting, all too warm—
Quite likely ’twas the chocolate.)

But he is reminded by a sudden strain of the nightingale, who is in the bird conspiracy in favor of the Poodle, of his sweetheart at home, and forthwith he starts up, tells the widow the truth, and quits her with just as little resentment in her heart as it is possible for a true woman to have under the circumstances. He reaches the Rhine, and there he comes to grief. He is arrested for the murder of a poor Jew pedler, on the circumstance that some of the Jew’s property is found on him. How the birds turn in and help him; how the widow befriends him; how the rich baker is found to be the murderer; and how Hanne and the Poodle become united, and how the stately Adebör looks down the chimney of the newly married pair,

“ Dunn seggt hei : ‘ So is dit
Adjüs! Wenn’t Frühjöhrr wedder kihrt

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Denn bring' ich Jug wat mit.
Passt up! Dat sall vör Allen
Grossmutting Snutsch gefallen,'''

—it being the custom in North Germany (as also detailed by Hans Andersen) for the storks to supply any call for babies, they, as importers, having a "corner" in that trade.

He also wrote at this period (1858-63) *Ut mine Festungstid*. This pathetic comic history of his prison life shows the man in a charming light. There is no bitterness in it—nothing but gentleness and humor. The military officers with whom he came in contact are all treated with fairness. There is no petty grumbling; and while the account of the manly Colonel, a compatriot who was so thoughtful of the poor boy's situation, as related in the first part of his story, has something tragic in it, the scene of the kind, superannuated old commandant in charge of Dömitz, and his lovely family, would strike any one as the perfection of homely humor. It is quite likely that perhaps the military officers of that day were not as apprehensive of political danger as the civilians, and were, therefore, possibly less given to cruelty in the line of their duty.

The *Olle Camellen* series is probably the most pretentious of all Fritz Reuter's pro-

ductions; and whatever criticisms might be thrown out as to the "sketchiness" of the stories, they are no weaker in that respect than the corresponding period in the labors of Dickens and Thackeray. It is on a plane with these two authors that we would place Fritz. His career did not extend as far, but his efforts are worthy the same order of praise. *Ut mine Stromtid* has in it the germ of a new "Vicar of Wakefield." There is purity of delineation in every character. Dickens could never draw a gentleman well; Thackeray found it hard to color up his lady portraitures with proper intensity; but poor Fritz had a tact in both lines, which, if developed, would have made his books something wonderful.

After reading *Olle Camellen*, one cannot but feel that in those little villages of Mecklenburg there are people the equal of any Scotch Covenanter or New England Puritan for rabid devotion to principle, and that throughout the wheat-fields, and along the little ponds they call lakes, there is enough kindness of heart and delicacy of feeling to civilize all Russia and Turkey, if it could only be distilled into them. Germany will never drop to pieces as long as there are Havermanns and his kind to bind the sheaves

together. A country that has so much force of character, morality, and shrewdness, lying, as it were, fallow in every farm and village, cannot be wondered at that it flings into fame in each generation its full measure of great men, and that when its enemies commence to swarm, it finds a hero in every flaxen poll summoned from the plough or the stable.

As long as the Plattdeutsch oak flourishes, and the Plattdeutsch speech is uttered, so long will there be a German empire and a German voice in the councils of worldly government. Fritz Reuter lived to see his writings eagerly read from one end of Germany to the other. He lived to enjoy the honors of aristocratic governments, without yielding a jot of his independence; to find his boyish vagary of a united Germany a reality, and to see the colors, for the wearing of which he took such severe punishment in his youth, the emblem of German victory. He lived to receive the favor and encomium of the great German Chancellor, whose wit and humor, and whose appreciation of wit and humor and their attendant pathos, are said to be as profound as his statesmanship. When the Franco-Prussian war broke out, Reuter was a practical patriot to the marrow, albeit

there is a tenderness in the little lyrics which he then wrote which shows how deeply he appreciated the private woes that find their hot-bed growth on the field of battle. In the latter years of his life, however, his malady crowded more persistently upon him. His later volumes, while marked at times with flashes of the fire that makes his writings so charming, still show that the foul fiend was at his elbow more frequently than ever. The "Journey to Constantinople" is a bit of humorous romance, combining his own souvenirs of the tour made by him in 1864 with the comic adventures of two rival Mecklenburg families, who are supposed to make the excursion. It is only a half success, though in it there are still traces of the old spirit. *Dörchläuchting* (His Little Serene Highness) also appeared at about this time.

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In 1874 he died, in the full enjoyment of a personal and literary popularity which only genius and national sympathy could explain. He had acquired a moderate fortune by his works, and had been settled for some years before his death at Eisenach. The disease which ended his life was some affection of the heart; but his morbid passion for alcohol was probably the remote cause.

I have not been able, in the foregoing slight biography, and in the one of Groth, to give a clear outline of the Groth and Reuter influence upon German social literature. The limits of a magazine article have already been too far trespassed upon. Nor have I, in either of the two Plattdeutsch essays, paid such regard to the bibliography of the two authors as, in these days of exact information, befits a review in any branch of literature. I must, however, refer the reader to Adolph Wilbrandt's biography of Reuter, to which I am indebted for most of the facts of Reuter's life. If one were to give an account of the Plattdeutsch reading clubs and social organizations that have sprung into existence in the last twenty years, it would be almost a literary history of North Germany. No such enthusiasm for any given branch of literature has been stirred since the days when Petrarch, Boccaccio, and their contemporaries labored for the spread of classical learning.

I must close this article, however, by saying, that if it seems to an English reader bold and unwarrantable in its enthusiasm, it is because I cannot bring Reuter out of the field in which he has flourished, any more than I could transplant to California the oak

which flourishes in his honor at Stavenhagen. One can bring across the ocean the hard, impenetrable pillars of Egypt; but the oak-tree drops his leaves, and seems, after transportation, to be nothing but firewood.

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SELECTION FROM "HANNE NÜTE."

THE PLATTDEUTSCH OAK.

I know of an oak by the shore of the sea;
Through his boughs the north winds make moan;
High tosseth his mighty crown, proudly and free,
The growth of full thousand years gone.

No human hand

His glories planned;

He stretcheth from Pommern to Netherland.

I know an oak-tree, all gnarly and scarred,
Whose roots bill or axe never harmed;
His bark is so rough and his timber so hard,
As though by some ban he were charmed.

But naught recks he;

A grand old tree

For another full thousand years he'll be.

The monarch, and with him his stately dame
And his daughter, walk on the strand;
"This oak, how mighty of girth and frame,
With branches that shadow the land!

Whose watch and ward

Hath so kept guard,

That his verdure thus gayly flaunts heavenward?"

As the King now seeketh an answer there,
Before him a working lad stands:

"Oh, Sire, the tree hath had little care

At yours, or the Queen's, or my Princess' hands:

SELECTION FROM "HANNE NÜTE."

DE EIKBOM.

Ik weit einen Eikbom, de steiht an de See,
De Nurdstorm, de brus't in sin Knäst,
Stolz reekt hei de mächtige Kron in de Höh;
So is dat all dusend Johr west;
Kein Minschenhand,
De hett em plant't;
Hei reekt sik von Pommern bet Nedderland.

Ik weit einen Eikbom vull Knornn un vull Knast,
Up den'n fött kein Bil nich un Aext.
Sin Bork is so rug un sin Holt is so fast,
As wir hei mal bannt un behext.
Nicks hett em dahn;
Hei ward noch stahn;
Wenn wedder mal dusend von Johren vergahn.

Un de König un sine Fru Königin
Un sin Tochter, de gahn an den Strand:
"Wat deiht dat för'n mächtigen Eikbom sin,
De sin Telgen reekt äwer dat Land?
Wer hett em plegt,
Wer hett em hegt,
Dat hei sine Bläder so lustig rögt?"

Un as nu de König so Antwort begehrt,
Trett vör em en junge Gesell:
"Herr König, Ji hewwt Jug jo sūs nich d'rüm schert,
Jug Fru nich un Juge Mamsell!

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No gentle folk
E'er watched the oak,
To guard it as sapling from harmful stroke.

"And now, the lusty old giant up-towers;
We Commons have tended him long;
The oak-tree, my Liege, the oak-tree is ours,
Of true Plattdeutsch nature and tongue :

No courtly wile
Hath grafted guile
On a growth ne'er fostered by royal smile."

Straightway the King's daughter gives him her
hand:

"God bless thee, my lad, for thy word.
The storm-blast may roar through our German land,
I know who can refuge afford.

Who, bold and free,
Hold Liberty—
Such hearts, in need, must loyal be."

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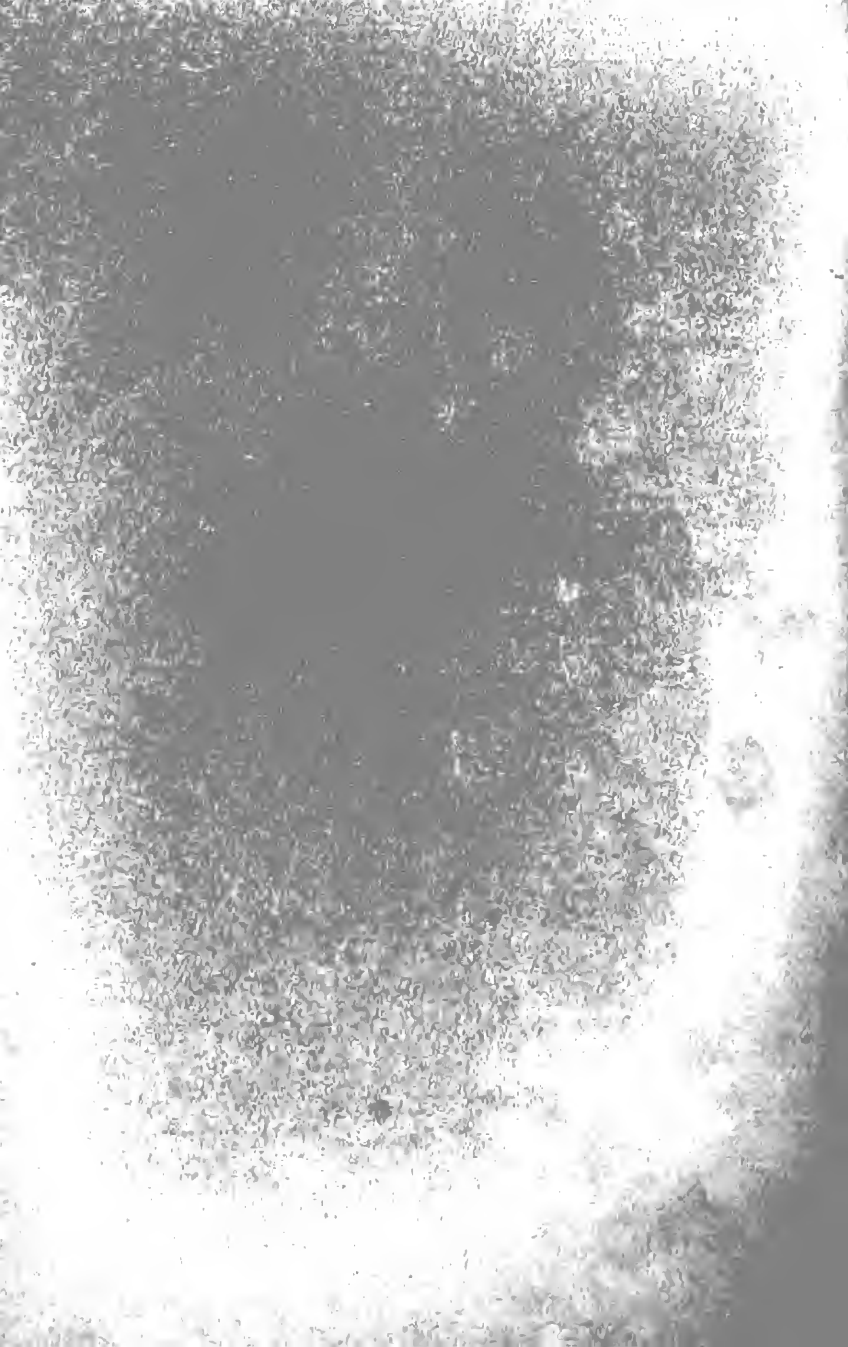
Kein vörnehm Lüd',
De hadden Tid,
Tau seihn, ob den Bom ok sin Recht geschüht.

“Un doch gräunt so lustig de Eikbom up Stun'ns,
Wi Arbeitslüd' hewwen em wohrt;
De Eikbom, Herr König, de Eikbom is uns',
Uns' plattdütsche Sprak is't un Ort.
Kein vörnehm Kunst
Hett s' uns verhunzt,
Fri wüssen s' tau Höchten ahn Königsgunst.”

Rasch giwwt em den König sin Dochter de Hand :

“Gott seg'n Di, Gesell, för Din Red'!
Wenn de Stormwind einst brus't dörch dat dütsche
Land,

Denn weit ik 'ne säkere Städ':
Wer eigen Ort
Fri wünn un wohrt,
Bi den'n is in Noth Ein taum besten verwohrt.”



BALLADS AND LYRICS.



AS it ever occurred to you what a divine attribute is the human voice? I am not going to prose to you about the ingenious anatomy of the larynx, or to explain acoustics, or to weary you with physical science in any shape. There are a number of kind-hearted, intelligent gentlemen down town—gentlemen who gingerly feel your pulse, and who are tenderly curious about the state of your tongue, who monopolize authority in that jurisdiction; and I have too much respect—fear, I might almost say—to venture to rival them in their special field.

There is no harm in my incidentally calling to your minds how the good God has blest us in the matter of voice. Did you ever study a joyful dog? Look, how he twists and twines his body almost around itself! How he dances hither and thither in a walk-around of aimless beatitude, leaps up and down (if he is properly trained, of course he keeps sheer of your person), and finally how

“He chortles in his joy”!

Poor brute! He cannot speak—he can merely *chortle*; and although the chortle be a complete sonata in itself, it is not of the category of articulate speech, and its highest development is a short, sharp bark. The bark means something—it means a great deal at times; and dogs, like parrots, are sometimes accused even of profanity. I think it was Sir William Hamilton who had a dog that was accustomed to ejaculate, “D—n grandmamma!” But the ordinary dog, black-and-tan, or pointer, or setter, or “yaller dog,” is no conversationalist. His genius lies in other channels entirely; and when he gets conceited and *thinks* he has a voice, and tries it (and people are always fancying they have talent when they have not), the community arises and subdues him.

Referring again to the matter of voice and speech: there is an old Persian tradition, that when humanity was first distributed over the earth, there was no speech. They worried along without it. When two people took the disease of love, in those quaint days, they did not talk at all; they looked in each other's eyes and “just knew it,” and the knowledge was all in all. But later the fine sensibility of those early mute passionists wore off, and it took at least a kiss to satisfy

them. Times are wonderfully altered since then. That is all very well for the Persians; but my own private theory is, that when the first man became ensnared, the silly creature felt as gay as a shouting Methodist, and that is the way he found out that he had vocal organs at all. *Ballads and Lyrics.*

But however those *pene*-protoplasmal ancestors started on their musical and elocutionary education, it must have been eons before they had anything like success in melody.

Take a rough bit of limestone: it is a dull pebble; it has no beauty save to a mineralogist, and little even to him. Grind that limestone, mix it with water, fling it in the sea; let it pass through transformation after transformation. It may, by good luck, gather itself together after ages, and appear in its integrity a pearl of great price—pink or black, as the conditions may warrant.

Such has been the fate of the human voice. The cave-dweller's organ is like the limestone, and the *diva's* is the pearl. Vocal limestone has survived in huge boulders, so to speak, and vocal pearls are rare and precious still.

I have said that it took long for humanity to find a voice—mellow and flexible—so long

that ever since it has been bolstered up by written speech it has scarcely improved. The Rig-Vedas probably were intoned in as melodious utterance when first composed as any speech of to-day. All great ideas, however, grow slowly.

Music has appropriated to itself most of the development of language—not all. Go and hear a great orator on a great subject, and you will see that voices are being cultivated. Actors are at work in that field. The theatre should be a school for speech. He is but a paltry clown who does not remember his duty in that regard.

If it took ages to smooth the hoarseness, the gurgle, the gruffness, the guttural out of the human voice in the times of pre-adamites—to comb out the tones, and take the snarls out—think how long it must have been before that voice grew capable of musical expression. Think how many generations of breeding the stock of that dog who could “d—n grandmamma” it would take, before developing a canine who could sing say such an easy-going air as “When Johnny comes marching home,” and of having it become a commonplace sort of accomplishment, such as an ordinary “yaller dog” could pretend to over his pipe and pewter.

The world that we know of, humanity as we find it recorded, was never without music. Man may, perhaps, have caught a bar or two of heavenly harmony from those ancient days, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

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Whether music, "heavenly maid," came directly from the skies to bless humanity, or whether she tarried on the way, teaching the brook to ripple, the wind to sigh, the ocean to murmur its music, the lark its song, Philomela to gurgle her air, the locust his *cello* arrangement, and so prepared an orchestra to which man, or perhaps lovely woman, should be the protagonist and choragus, song is old. The builder of the Pyramids had probably a "chanty" song as he heaved away at his huge blocks; the Nile boatman had his air as he floated lazily down the stream; the ploughman, and the reaper, and the soldier had their melodies, only there were no phonographs to bring them to us; and the tiles of Nineveh may tell us many things, but not the music that floated in the Assyrian atmosphere or about the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

We cannot even make certain of our own more direct predecessors, the Greeks and Romans, and their musical ideas. We know

Ballads and Lyrics. that the songs of Sappho and Alcaeus were beautifully sung; but we cannot sing them; and we only surmise their sweetness.

To-night, I am to discuss, in a sketchy sort of way, the subject of Ballads and—incidentally and by way of digression—of Lyrics. Ballads and Lyrics must be considered a very broad subject. It is hard to say where we can commence. Orpheus is too far back—even Terpander, the Æolian, is a misty personage; Arion is almost a demigod with antiquity.

Then, too, the terms have a broad signification. Dr. Maginn has very plausibly put the Homeric poems in the category of ballads, and Macaulay has tried to fancy, from the few Fescennine verses which have come down to us, what Roman ballads were like.

Lyrics are a character of composition more easily typified and classed, and nowadays ballad and lyric somewhat overlap each other; although the lyric has generally crowned the musical goddess, while the ballad has come by way of girdle about her heart. Our present lyric form is more than twenty-five centuries old. The learned and genial author of “*Rab and His Friends*” compares without violence Sappho, 600 B. C., and Burns, of our own century almost; and the comparison is striking and suggestive.

It has been seriously deplored that the preservers and editors of ballad and song collections have in the main been worthy old Dryasdusts—gentlemen powerful in the matter of plodding learning, but in no wise gifted with the delicacy of hearing which appertaineth to the joyous science of music; and hence have neglected the airs which vivified the ancient minstrelsy of the present cultivated world. You might as well ask a lifeless form, bereft of the electric blood which should permeate it, to show forth an intellect, as that a song or ballad should win its applause by the simple mumbling of the words, that have fastened upon its music like moss upon some lithe and airy statue. I felt the force of that fact when the matter of my present discourse was first suggested to me, and also that something heroic must be done to shelter my own short-comings; and I must admit that it is a perverse fate that has placed me in the attitude, in any capacity, of expounder of the science and art of song.

When a man is in a bad way; when business has ruined him, and the financial world has given him the cold shoulder; when he is desperate, and saltpetre wouldn't save him—he generally goes moping home and pours out the wealth of his misery in his good wife's

*Ballads and
Lyrics.*

lap, mopping his disconsolate eyes in her apron. She it is who must find expedients; she must invent something; and whether she succeeds or not, he crawls behind her ample skirts for protection and sustenance. Such is man's nature. With all his conceited brutality, his arrogant assumption of independence, from the earliest protoplasmic days, doubtless, he has, at his last or despairing moments, cowered behind the woman as a bulwark of courage.

And so I took a *manly* course for to-night. I have sought a lady's assistance * to help me out; and all I can say now is, that if there is any failure in this evening's programme, of course it is the fault of the woman. Before proceeding to the matter of my essay, I would make another suggestion to you upon which to reflect in connection with the subject of the evening: It is the resistless power which voiceful music has upon our wills—how it usurps an unbidden authority over us. I sometimes think there is something uncanny and unchristian in the spell. The story of the Sirens and Odysseus is no absolute fiction; Lorelei charming the Rhine boatmen is

*Judge Rearden was aided in the reading of this essay by Mrs. Ida Norton, who sang the ballads and lyrics mentioned, or others illustrative of the text.

not a legendary absurdity. If I were one of those good old-fashioned judges, like Sir Matthew Hale, and issued writs *de sagis comburendis*, for the burning of witches, I would not bother my head at all about the withered beldames who rode broomsticks, and were fond of other out-of-the-way amusements, but would see if the culprit could sing; and if yea, there would be a *prima facie* case against her, which it would require strong evidence to rebut, and the sheriff would at once see that there was a bountiful supply of faggots at hand. *Ballads and Lyrics.*

Music is indeed a material force—as much so as light, heat, or electricity; and its effect is as magical and inexplicable.

You are all familiar with the Fall of Man—you believe it—you ought to, from internal evidence alone—his temptation, as set forth in those sublime first chapters of Genesis. That story has come home to the bosoms of nations whose names have passed into oblivion. Those chapters have in them the expression of great truths, philosophical, psychical, and physical—“And the man said: the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, *she* gave me of the tree, and I did eat.”

The story may or may not be an allegory; but were I to restate that truth for modern

comprehension, as homely preachers sometimes do treat Bible truths, I would not depict it precisely as it occurred to the sacred historian (something similar occurred to Vergil, however). But I should not represent the temptress as slinking out from behind the orchard—a snow-limbed Eve—her beautiful jaws stretched over the expansive surface of a mellow pippin, or holding it out treacherously for the unsuspecting Adam to “take a bite.” No, I should depict her as fully clothed, sauntering along some trout-stream, with a typical rod and fly in her grasp, and a big flip-flapping hat upon her beautiful head, trolling some ballad catch, and enchanting and enslaving some silly angler down the stream; or perhaps in some country house, on a rainy day, seated at a tuneless piano and picking out some careless notes, while the *corpus delicti* lounged upon a sofa, puffing a stupid cigar, and gazing in enraptured idiocy upon the Moresque convolutions of her back hair.

The Laureate—back in the thirties—seems to have had some such idea of the modern siren, and he has shadowed it forth in “Maud”:

“ A voice by the cedar-tree,
In the meadow under the Hall!

She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad, gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call!
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart, and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.
Maud, with her exquisite face,
And wild voice, pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud, in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death and of Honor that cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean,
And myself so languid and base.
Silence, beautiful voice!
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice."

And again :

"'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendor falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls;
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow fleet;
She is walking in the meadow,

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And the woodland echo rings;
In a moment we shall meet;
She is singing in the meadow,
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the *ballad* that she sings."

In short, the poet thoroughly appreciated the charm of a simple song; and his own exquisite successes in that behalf are conclusive evidences of the fact.

I refer to this simplicity to show how powerful is the impression which Folk-music has upon the human organization, partly perhaps because it appeals to our homelier intellectual capacity, but chiefly because of the sensuous form—the musical vehicle wherewith the idea is conveyed to or aroused within us.

Fletcher of Saltoun, in the glorious days of English literature and taste, advanced the belief that he cared not who made the nation's laws provided that he could make its ballads; and Sir Philip Sidney declares: "I never heard Chevy Chase, the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet, and yet it is sung but by some blinde crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style."

The ballad is a comparatively modern poetic form. It is reputed to have taken its

rise in the later Byzantine days. In those times, the ancient Greek language had fallen upon evil days. It was subject to constant disintegration. The poetic dew which had glistened upon both poetry and prose from the glory of Homer to the polished Alexandrine poets was being dispelled in the harsh and sultry noon-day of the Lower Empire. The old cicada music was stilled; the great god Pan had long been dead; and the language was as broken and formless as an ice palace in ruin. Quantity and tone—that something beautiful in the youth of Grecian language—had vanished; and accent was represented by emphasis; and chivalric poetry, love ditty, and drinking song—everything appertaining to sentiment, came forth in a flippant and jingling measure, and bearing as much resemblance to ancient Greek rhythmic sublimity as a coin of those Greek emperors was in art like an intaglio of Pyrgoteles or Dioscorides.

One of the fashions of the Greek balladist—if I may so call him—was to work into his compositions the Grecian legends of more classical epochs, as handed down in vulgar tradition, or as travestied from the scholarship that, until the downfall of Constantinople, still haunted the Byzantine capital. For instance,

Ballads and Lyrics. a popular ballad story was that of Hero and Leander, which strayed into the far west of Europe, as it is found in almost every Germanic dialect.

Legends of the saints also were embodied and told in ballads, and it is from the softened poetic versions of popular song that we obtain our current ideas of many of the religious heroes, whose portraiture in history is often widely at variance with the miraculous halo cast about the saint's head by the rhythmic tale. For instance, St. George of Cappadocia, the patron of English chivalry, is described in far different terms in the cold pages of Gibbon from the heroic slayer of the loathly dragon, as he is depicted in legends and mythic verse.

I must here trespass upon the patience of my audience by reading a Greek-Romaic ballad, a fair type of the character I have mentioned, introduced to Americans by the late learned Professor Sophocles, who did so much for Greek scholarship in the United States, from the faithful version of President Felton.

CONSTANTINE AND ARETÉ.

O mother, thou with thy nine sons, and with one
only daughter,
Thine only daughter, well beloved, the dearest of
thy children,

For twelve years thou didst keep the maid—the *Ballads and*
sun did not behold her, *Lyrics.*
Whom in the darkness thou didst bathe—in secret
braid her tresses;
And by the starlight and the dawn, didst wind her
curling ringlets;
Nor knew the neighborhood that thou didst have
so fair a daughter—
When came to thee from Babylon, a wooer's soft
entreaty—
Eight of the brothers yielded not, but Constantine
consented—
“O mother, give thine Arete, bestow her on the
stranger,
That I may have her solace dear when far away I
wander.”
“Though thou art wise, my Constantine, thou hast
unwisely spoken;
Be woe my lot, or be it joy, who will restore my
daughter?”
He calls to witness God above, he calls the Holy
Martyrs,
Be woe her lot, or be it joy, he would restore her
daughter—
And when they wedded Arete in that far distant
country,
Then comes the year of sorrowing, and all the
nine did perish.
All lonely was the mother left like a reed alone in
the meadow;
O'er the eight graves she beats her breast, o'er
eight was heard her wailing,
And at the tomb of Constantine, she rends her
hair in anguish.

Ballads and Lyrics. " Arise, my Constantine, arise, for Arete I languish;

On God to witness thou didst call, didst call the Holy Martyrs,

Be woe my lot, or be it joy, thou wouldst restore my daughter."

And forth at midnight hour he fares, the silent tomb deserting;

He makes the cloud his flying steed, he makes the star his bridle,

And by the silver moon conveyed, to bring her home he journeys :

And finds her combing down her locks, abroad by silvery moonlight,

And greets the maiden from afar, and from afar bespeaks her :

" Arise, my Aretula dear, for thee our mother longeth."

" Alas, my brother ! What is this ? What wouldst at such an hour ?

If joy betide our distant home, I wear my golden raiment,

If woe betide, dear brother mine, I go as now I'm standing."

" Think not of joy, think not of woe—return as here thou standest."

And while they journey on the way, all on the way returning,

They hear the birds and what they sing, and what the birds are saying :

" Ho, see the maiden all so fair—a Ghost it is that bears her."

" Didst hear the birds, my Constantine; didst list to what they're saying ? "

"Yes, they are birds, and let them sing—they're
birds, and let them chatter." *Ballads and Lyrics.*

And yonder, as they journey on, still other birds
salute them :

"What do we see, unhappy ones? Ah! woe is
fallen on us—

Lo, there the living sweep along, and with the
dead they travel!"

"Didst hear, my brother Constantine, what yonder
birds are saying?"

"Yes, birds are they, and let them sing—they're
birds, and let them chatter."

"I fear for thee, my brother dear, for thou dost
breathe of incense."

"Last evening late we visited the church of St.
Johannes;

And there the priest perfumed me o'er with clouds
of fragrant incense."

And onward as they hold their way, still other
birds bespeak them—

"O God, how wondrous is Thy power, what mira-
cles Thou workest!

A maid so gracious and so fair! A Ghost it is that
bears her."

'Twas heard again by Arete, and now her heart
was breaking;

"Didst hearken, brother Constantine, to what the
birds are saying?

Say, where are now thy waving locks, thy strong,
thick beard—where is it?"

"A sickness sore has me befallen, and brought me
near to dying."

They find the house all locked and barred—they
find it barred and bolted,

Ballads and Lyrics. And all the windows of the house with cobwebs covered over.

"Unlock, O mother mine, unlock, thine Arete thou seest."

"If thou art Charon, get thee gone—I have no other children—

My hapless Arete afar, in stranger lands is dwelling."

"Unlock, O mother mine, unlock, thy Constantine entreats thee.

I called to witness God above, I called the Holy Martyrs,

Were woe thy lot, or were it joy, I would restore thy daughter."

And when unto the door she came, her soul from her departed.

Those of you who recall Bürger's famous ballad of "Leonora," paraphrased by Sir Walter Scott in "William and Mary," will notice some dramatic effects in this Greek prototype, which Bürger doubtless borrowed, notably the manner in which the heroine of the ghostly ride becomes, step by step, conscious that her companion is a disembodied spirit.

A Greek song ! Not such as Sappho sang—not such as Anacreon sang; not even such as have come down to us—the tavern catches in the days of Alcibiades, or when Horace was getting his education at Athens. Such have musically vanished, although Scheffel

makes his little Byzantine maid of honor in *Der treue Ekkehard* sing in the ninth century an Anacreontic love ditty fifteen hundred years old. Could we to-night evoke one of the revelling deipnosophists of Athenaeus, we would have something from his jovial throat which we would not wish to forget. But we are indebted to a young friend, lately returned from Greece, for the words, and to his mother for the air, of a more modern Greek lyric of popular type, breathing of liberty and Christianity.*

The ballad originally did not have the loose meaning which for several hundreds of years we have given to it. It was, at the outset, a song combined with a dance, rude, maybe, but essentially of rhythmic motion. There is scarcely a vestige left of this original form. The nearest approach to the ballad proper in our day is in children's songs:

“Nor you nor I nor no one knows
How oats, pease, beans, and barley grows”;
or,
“Hippety, hippety hop to the barber's shop
To buy a stick of candy”;
or,
“Uncle John is very sick;
What shall we send him?”

* Which was here sung.

*Ballads and
Lyrics.*

The French have a numerous array of these melodies, like "Le Chevalier du Guët," and old song-books indicate how large an element was bodily motion in popular music. All these have a certain dramatic kernel in their composition, which has perhaps lain dormant for thousands of years, like the seeds of flowers shut in from moisture by the rocky clefts where they repose. I think a touch of the idea in the common children's game,—

"Open the gates as high as the sky,"

may be found in Sappho, as a bridal song, and even in the Divine Psalmist, as a part of the choral service of the Temple.

Italy has ever been the home of music. Dante was proud of his songs, and polished their versification with more care than probably he bestowed upon his Divine Poem. Petrarch put into his all the sweetness and light with which his temperament and climate were endowed. Italy is the true home of popular music; for every one there seems a poet, and every ear is attuned to harmony.

Spanish glory is prophesied in the lullabies with which it was cradled, in the days of Pelayo and Don Jaime. The early literature of Spain is one of ballads. There is something gallant and gay about every rhythmic

tradition of The Cid and his stately wife Ximena. No wonder the French dramatist was carried away with his subject. *Ballads and Lyrics.*

It is likely that the Gothic chants of the early kingly period of Spain were modified and often supplanted by the musical themes of the Moslem intruders.

It is difficult to snatch an idea of a race so widely divergent from Western sentiment as the Arab; but there is a song which may serve as a type, the English words whereof are by one Carlyle (not Thomas—he had little music in his soul), a scholar of the last century. It is a very ancient ditty of the desert roamer.

Herder in Germany made a close study of Folk-music among the Germanic nations; and "Sir Olaf and His Bride" was from the same legendary source as Goethe's "Erl-King." Indeed, Herder looked into Spanish ballad history as well; and his stringing together of the verse that told the story of the Cid Campeador, and his courtship and brave deeds, is a charming production, full of fire and music.

Goethe's catholic taste led him in the same direction. His "King in Thule" is a repolished Folk-song (the same may be said of the "Erl-King"), spreading in variations through Danish, German, Norse, and even

English literature. Goethe had a felicitous way of appropriating songs that had attracted him. The ditty sung by Mephisto at Margaret's window comes from Ophelia—a cynical song that in fact has its origin far back in Byzantine days; and even the quaint grave-digger's song in Hamlet is put by the German poet in the mouth of his Lemures at Faust's death. The music of the "Erl-King" may be said to have almost made Schubert's reputation.

Heine was a master of lyric composition; but he, too, like Molière, took his goods wherever he found them, with a noble disregard of the hue-and-cry of plagiarism. His song of "Lorelei" is but the latest blossom of a popular poetic growth, as definite and smooth as the Rhine itself.

The earliest ascertained specimen of an English ballad is one with the words of which some of you are perhaps familiar. We are indebted for much of our lyric literature to one Walter Mapes, whom Tennyson brings on the scene in his drama of "Becket."

"Somer is ycomen in"

is in the English-Saxon of its day, the twelfth century.

The real home of the English ballad is

the "North Countrie." The Lowland Scot, *Ballads and Lyrics.*
peasant or noble, has ever

"Heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies."

In looking into the songful history of the land of Burns, one is fairly overcome with the embarrassment of riches. Burns himself is only the crown of the column. There are none of the Scottish poets who are his exact equals; but if Burns be ranked as a lyric duke, there are many earls, and a mob of voiceful barons of music. Even the bar in Scotland have ears and voices, from Lord Neaves and George Outram down to a humble apprentice like Sir Walter. Burns did not scorn taking an old ballad or song, and fitting it up to his liking; and of his work it may be said, as Dr. Johnson said of Goldsmith:

"Nil tetegit quod non ornavit."

Ballads had fallen into disrepute in the days of Queen Bess—a sure index of their overworn popularity prior to that time. It is amusing to note the frequent references to ballads in Shakspeare as tending to show the precise esteem in which they were held. It may, too, be remarked how low the glorious minstrel's profession had fallen, when we find

Prince Hal breaking the head of that wise and witty man, Sir John, for likening him to a "singing man of Windsor." If all the pertinent citations in Shakspeare are collated, a very good definition of a ballad will be evolved. It will be seen that any short lyric was then yclept a ballad, although no possibility of singing it to dance music existed. It may be noted, however, that none of the songs found in Shakspeare are certainly his own. He took what was good in popular use; and it may also be noted that his taste is generally exquisite.

Irish ballads had the air of a bygone and faded beauty. Irish music seemed a sort of croon, to be murmured by some bent and decrepit granny as she turned a spinning-wheel. Moore, however, poured his poetic elixir into the shrivelled lips; and the melodies resounded from Dublin to Calcutta, from London to Upper Canada.

There is one thing which may be remarked about the Irish air: when the movement is rapid, it is humorous—I might almost say witty—and grotesque; when slow, it is painfully weird and pathetic.

You have all been touched with the beauty of "The Last Rose of Summer"; but take the same notes in the original air, "The

Groves of Blarney," and change again to "The Bells of Shandon." Thackeray was fond of this air—probably because, like himself, it had pathos, satire, and fun in every turn of the tune. *Ballads and Lyrics.*

It never seems to have been necessary to invent a new tune for each separate ballad or lyric. Indeed, a ballad tune is all the better for age—like a Stradivarius violin. The tune must have passed through many vicissitudes; it must have been voiced forth in the squire's hall, in the wayside inn, in the hunting field; it must have floated down streams, sung by maudlin lovers and rejected suitors, by soldiers and sailors, by gentle and simple, drunk and sober, before it could be deemed of the true mellowness to entitle it to its ultimate royal degree as a ballad air.

Let us take one instance: When in the East, Chateaubriand heard among the Arabs a certain well-known air; and somehow, he romantically assumed that it had been originally brought to France by returned Crusaders, who had heard it sung beneath the walls of Ascalon to the clash of paynim shields.

"Malbrouck s'en va-t-en guerre"

was a cradle melody sung by the muse of the

Ballads and Lyrics. unhappy dauphin, Louis Seize. The bewitching Marie Antoinette caught the air and its grotesque words, and hummed the song among her brilliant courtiers. Forthwith, all France was taken with the fun; and the fictitious death of the great English duke was in every mouth. The absurd story of the song was painted upon fans, each verse adorning a separate fold; and the beautiful duchess was represented, now fat, now lean, and always ridiculous.

You may remember the

“Pretty page with dimpled chin,”

in the “Marriage of Figaro,” and how Mozart puts in his mouth a beautiful song, which will probably charm many a future generation as it has many a past. Well, Beaumarchais, like the courtier that he was, in the prose drama as it was originally produced, has this pretty page sing his woe and languorous passion for his charming godmother, the countess, to this same tune of “Malbrouck, that prince of commanders.” Then the army men got hold of the tune, and every cavalry man rubbed down his horse, or polished his brasses, to the air of

“It’s a way we have in the army.”

And so it travelled back and forth; and tradition has it that the great Napoleon was wont to hum the air as he mounted to start forth upon his campaigns, and it came back to him at St. Helena as a grotesque reminiscence. It ultimately crossed the water; and I think I can remember graceless college students howling, in a symphony of inebriety, *Ballads and Lyrics.*

“We won’t go home till morning,
Till daylight doth appear,”

and other lawless and irregular sentiments not necessary here to specify.

Another air which has served many a song, as a sort of Leporello to a wicked Don Giovanni, is “Lauriger.” It hath a smack of that jolly old cleric, Archdeacon Mapes, of Oxford, who wrote the song,

“Mihi est propositum
In taberna mori,”

of which Leigh Hunt has made an English version. It has been a Kneip song:

“Auf meiner Kneip ist alles leer”;

then the mournful whine of a woman-hater, down in the dumps, with a frightful Katzenjammer, no money, and a jilting sweetheart,

“Tannenbaum, oh Tannenbaum”;

Ballads and Lyrics. then a political song in the days of '48 in Prussia,

“Oh Holzenberg, oh Holzenberg,
Du segen von Neu Brandenburg”;

and, as “Lauriger,” it crossed the ocean; and down in the old National Road town of Cumberland I have heard it sung by malignant but lovely rebels behind rose-trellised windows as “Maryland, my Maryland.”

Here let me say—and any married man present will promptly bear me out in the statement—that lovely woman is never supremely happy save when she is rebelling against something or somebody. The sex enjoys sedition. You all remember the great hulking brute of an Irishman who was twitted with the fact that his little wife could beat him whenever she chose, and who replied, “It don’t hurt me, and it plazes her.” Hence, a rebellious song, Jacobite or Southron, has a special fitness from a woman’s throat.

Another air which has done yeoman service in all climates and times is the song in “Arrah na Pogue.” There is a tippling air indigenous to Scotland, which scents strongly of toddy:

“We’ve always been provided for,
And sae we sall be yet.”

This catch, borne on a whiff of punch across the Irish sea, turns up in Ireland as a patriotic song of '98,— *Ballads and Lyrics.*

“I met with Napper Tandy,
And he tuk me by the hand”;

and, whatever the entire lyric was, Mr. Boucicault found it and added verses to it, and it circled the globe as the “Wearing of the Green.” It had passed over to America betimes; and when the Central Pennsylvania Railroad threw out of employment an army of teamsters, they vented their grief and resentment in a strain to the old air:

“A-cheating us poor wagoners
And every honest man.”

Then Dr. O'Brien, of the army, immortalized Benny Havens to the old tune; and every college in the land admitted it as a student-song with many sets of words. But the most aristocratic promotion which the air received was when Dr. Holmes wrote his “Song of Other Days,” and the melody, tippler-like, hovered over the famous punch-bowl of the learned, the witty, the poetic, and the now venerable professor; and in my day, I remember the air floating about colleges, with the Doctor's charming lyric:

“As o'er the glacier's frozen sheet.”

But I must close. I have not done justice to the subject of my essay, nor can I. I will not claim for the ballad any place in the hierarchy of intellectual enjoyment to which it is not entitled. But whatever else there may be lacking in the ballad, it is genuine in its nature. It cannot be rhetorically parsed, nor need it be. Its true emotional nature may best be described in the words of Shakespeare introducing one of the sweet airs of his time:

“Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,
That old and antique song we heard last night;
Methought it did relieve my passion much.

Mark it, Cesario, it is old and plain;
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun
And the free maids that weave their thread with
bones
Do use to chaunt it: it is silly sooth,
And dallies with the innocence of love,
Like the old age.”

That Shakespeare was subject to the witchery of song may be seen in his verse—

“That strain again; it had a dying fall:
O, it came o’er my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor.”

There are, here and there, in Shakspeare *Ballads and*
verses of songs which have been lost, but *Lyrics.*
which have excited, even as fragments, a
certain degree of admiration and literary
interest. Of one such but a single line re-
mains, a drop of liquid in the Shakspearian
crystal. It is,

“King Cophetua loved a beggar maid.”

On this suggestion, Tennyson, in years gone
by, composed a simple and beautiful lyric.

Bishop Percy of Dromore, a learned and
accomplished prelate of the English Church,
and a scholar who has done as much as any
one to instruct the English-speaking world
as to the wealth of its early poetry, gathered
together several fragments in Shakspeare,
not assignable to any known ballad, to make
up his famous

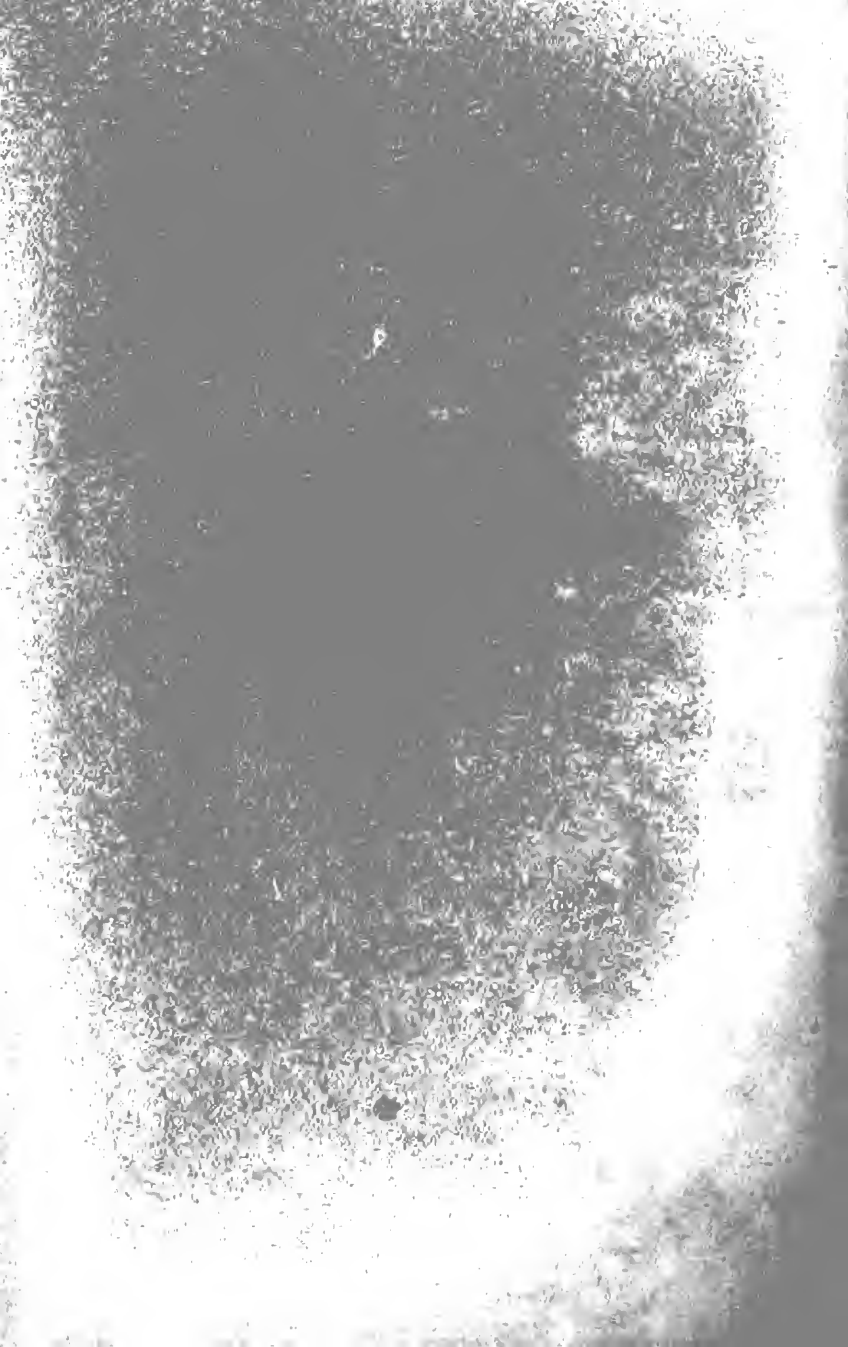
“’Twas a friar of orders gray.”

It was this song which was the rival of Gold-
smith’s cheery and witty ballad of “Ange-
lina,” on the same idea, neither poet being
conscious of having, in their sympathy of
thought, pursued the same path.

And now, for your attention to the essay’s
reading, I have to thank you. I think I
said at the opening that if any failure occurred

Ballads and Lyrics. in the evening's entertainment, you were in duty bound to ascribe it to the woman. If there has been any measure of success, it is, of course, the province of masculine modesty to lay thereto an exclusive claim. In apology for myself, however, I will say, with Don Armado, that "the words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo."

POEM.



“THE SEA! THE SEA!”*



IFE'S fevered day declines
its purple twilight falling
Draws length'ning shadows
from the broken flanks;
And from the column's head,
a viewless chief is calling:
“ Guide right—close up your ranks.”

As once in ancient time, a Grecian host
defiant
Reeled back from Persia's might and
treachery,
And marched, on stubborn Grecian pluck
alone reliant,
Down to the Pontic Sea;

Full many a cruel foe they met and bravely
routed,
Battling on plain, in gorge, all mightily,

* This poem was written by Judge T. H. Rearden, for the Memorial Service of the G. H. Thomas Post, G. A. R., of San Francisco, held May 3, 1892. It was read on that occasion by a member of the Post, Judge Rearden being ill at the time. He died May 10, 1892.

*"The Sea!
The Sea!"* Until, the last ridge climb'd, the vanguard
gazed and shouted
In tears: "The Sea! The Sea!"

So we, to-day, with Life's slow, carking
sorrows weary,
With hearts and natures sore and over-
worn,
Have trodden long the steep and rugged
highway dreary—
A band of hope forlorn.

A band forlorn, our garish banners torn and
faded;
Yet still with pulses beating high and free,
We view the silent, misty shore, with vision
shaded,
Of dim Eternity.

Lo! on the Infinite, Life's straitened king-
dom verges,
Worn by the flood of Death's weird
mystery;
And as we catch the flashing light on burst-
ing surges,
We hail the friendly sea.

Gone are ye glorious leaders of our youthful muster, *"The Sea!
The Sea!"*

Whose sharp command thrilled like electric flame,
Your mem'ries blended with the sanguine,
lurid lustre
That gilds the warrior's name.

Ye comrades, too, the young, the gay, the lion-hearted,
Dead on the field or slain by Fever's breath—
How many changing years since you and we were parted—
Your valor sealed by Death!

Far in the broad and gray expanse of spirit vision,
Where tempests rail not, Heaven forever smiles,
Float on an ever-laughing sea, the Fields Elysian,
The wished-for Happy Isles.

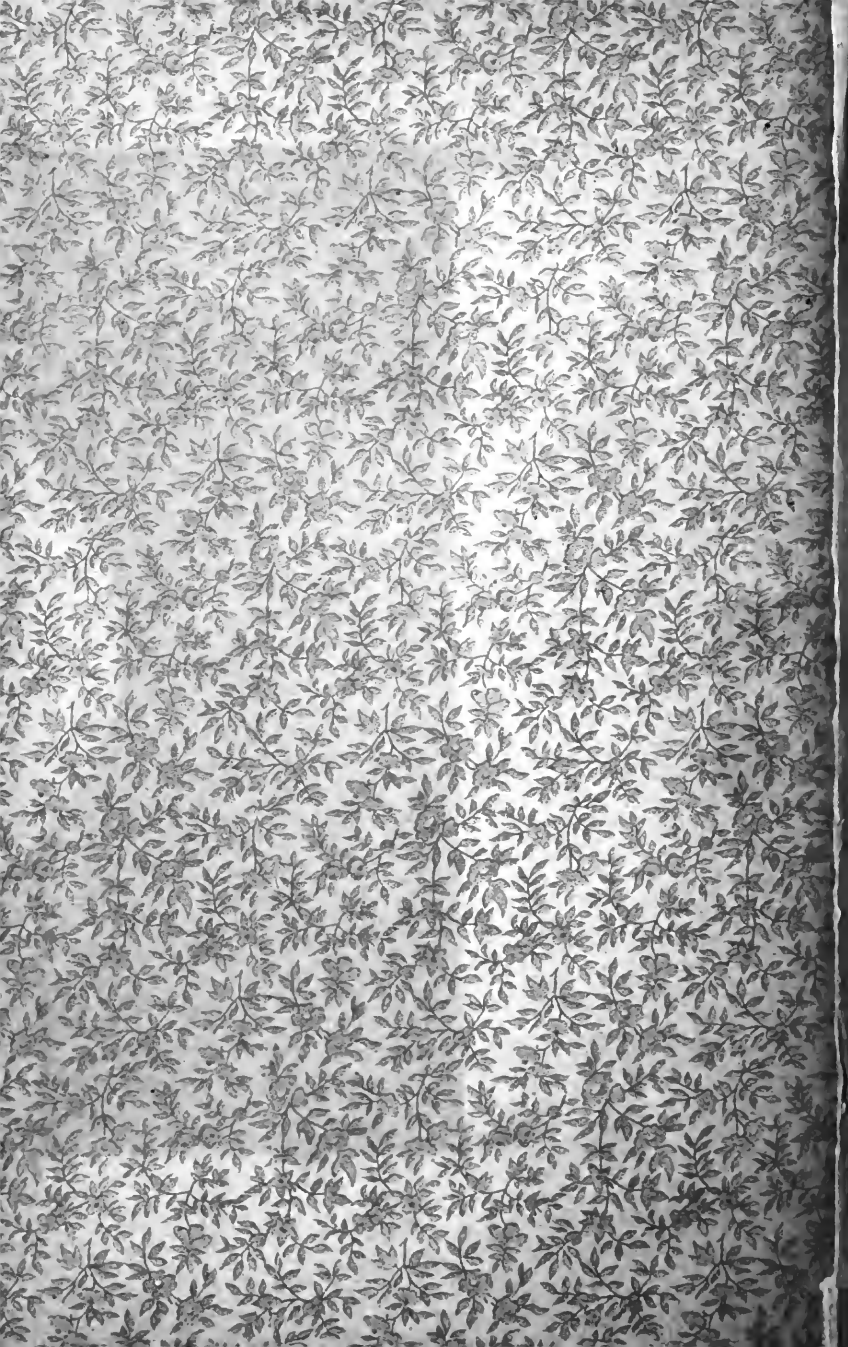
There, long-lost comrades, risen from your couches gory,
Leaving your nameless graves and crumbling clay,

"The Sea ! And, recking nothing earthly fame or paltry
The Sea ! glory,
Ye know a brighter day.

And there the stately captains of the host
immortal

Call out the guard that ushers heroes in;
And each brave soul that, trembling, knocks
at Death's dark portal
Is proudly mustered in.





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